

Exhibit B



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(12) **United States Patent**
Helferich

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(54) **SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR ENABLING
A USER OF A COMMUNICATION DEVICE
TO MANAGE REMOTE INFORMATION**

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of application No. 08/934,143, filed on Sep. 19, 1997,
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455/466; 340/7.21; 340/825.37

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455/3.05, 403, 100, 466, 550.1; 340/7.21,
340/7.52, 825.37

See application file for complete search history.

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Primary Examiner—Tony T. Nguyen

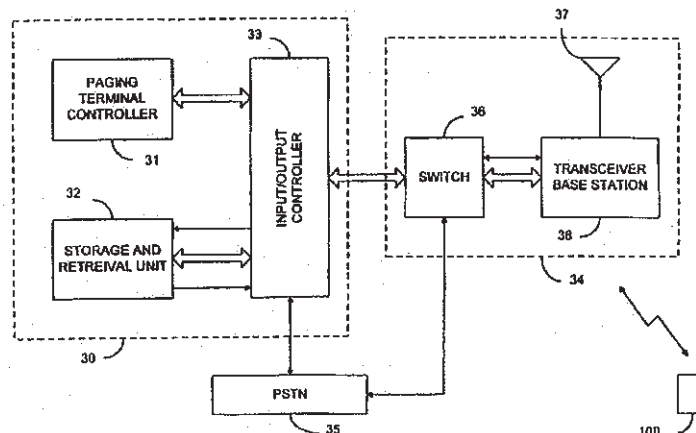
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A paging transceiver and method for selectively paging provides a page to a paging transceiver but does not automatically provide an associated message. The paging transceiver receives the page and alerts the user that a message is waiting and preferably provides a short description of the message. The user can then download or otherwise act on the message at a time and at a place convenient to the user. The user can therefore place the paging transceiver in a location where it can easily receive and reply to the message. The paging system conserves air time and the paging transceiver conserves memory by not automatically receiving the associated messages. The user can determine the time at which the paging transceiver receives transmissions, such as during off-peak hours. The messages stored by the systems and delivered to the paging transceiver may be of different types, such as voice, text, audio, or even video. In addition to messages, the paging system can store other information for the user, such as songs or video clips that the user can sample or updates on weather or stock rates.

94 Claims, 12 Drawing Sheets



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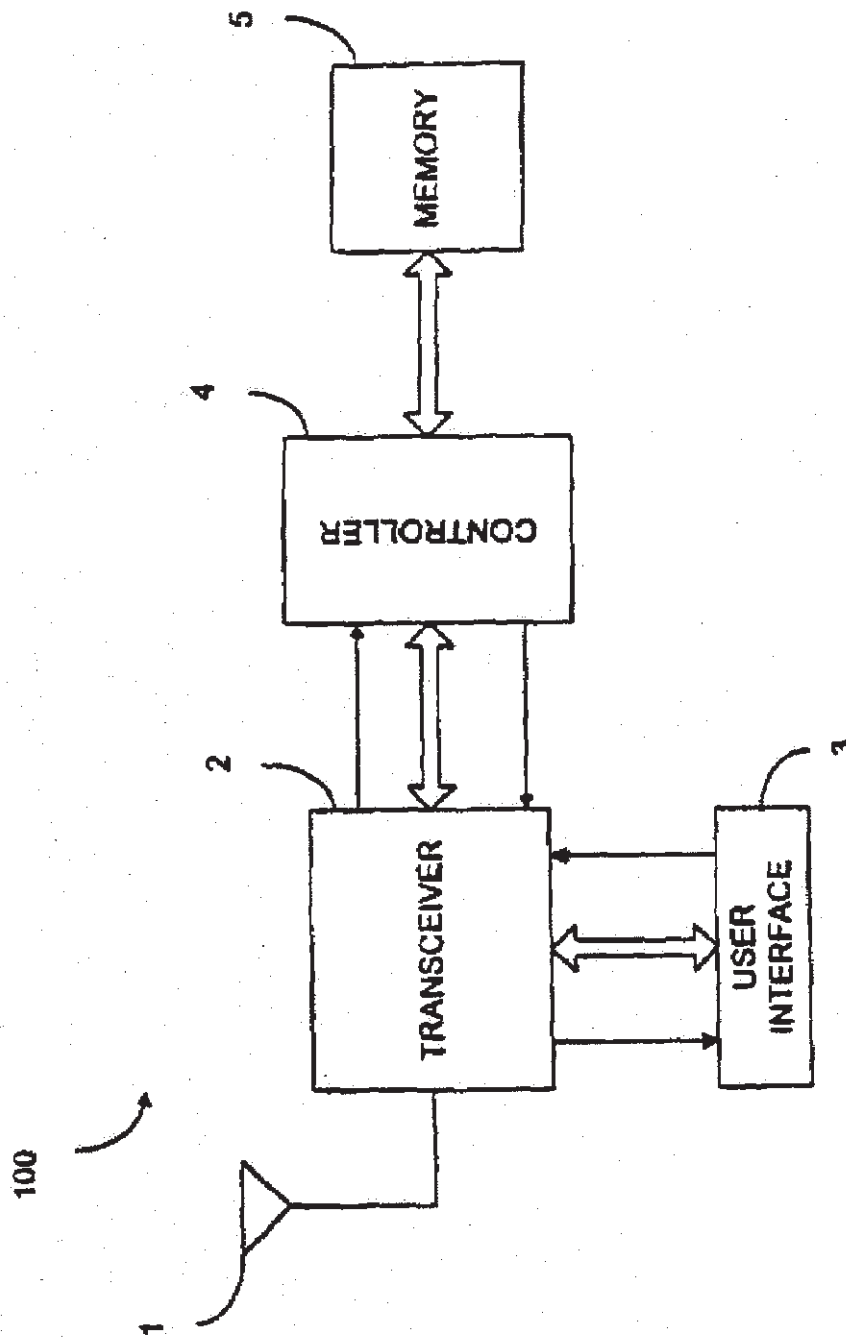


FIG. 1

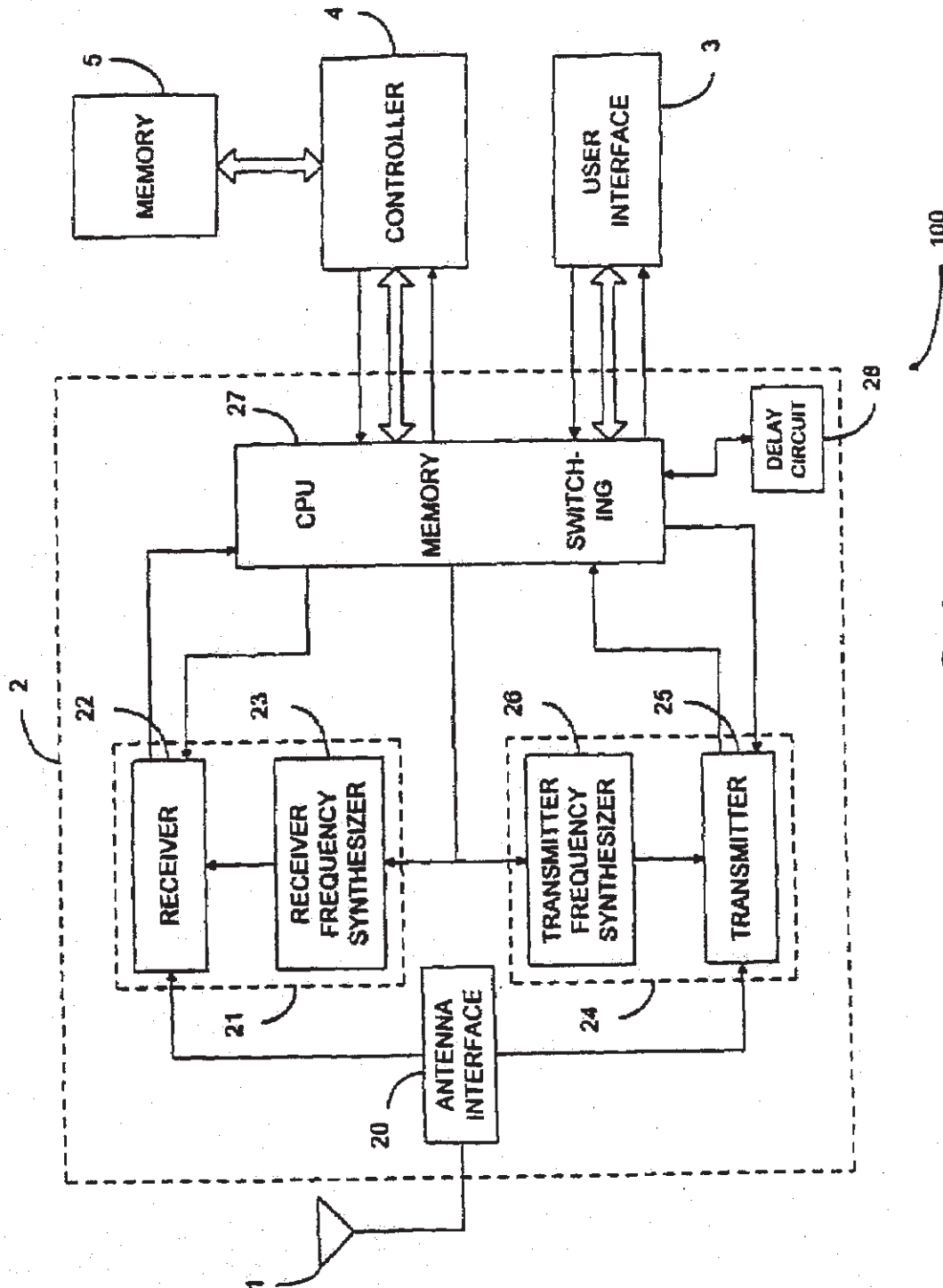


FIG. 2

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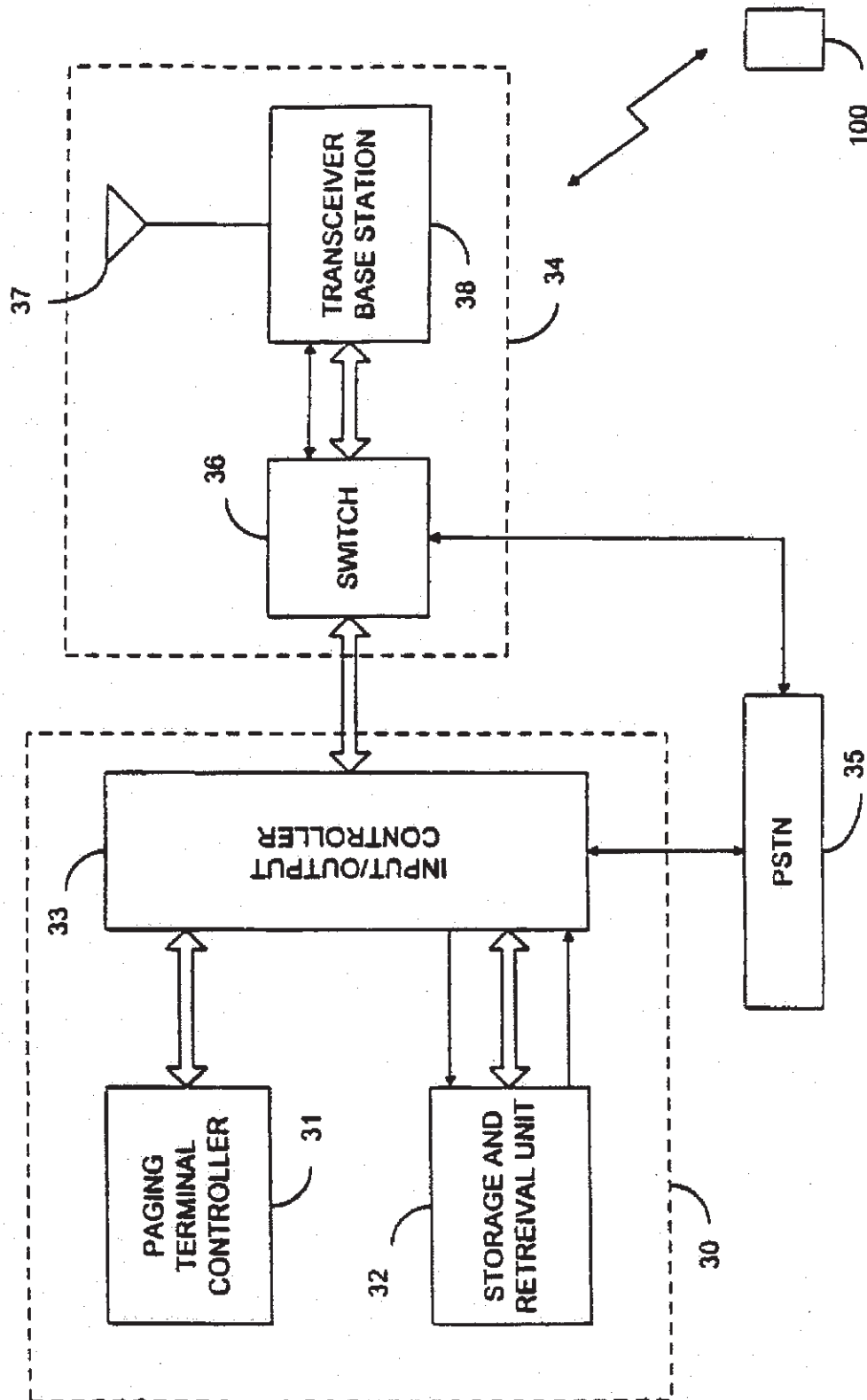


FIG. 3

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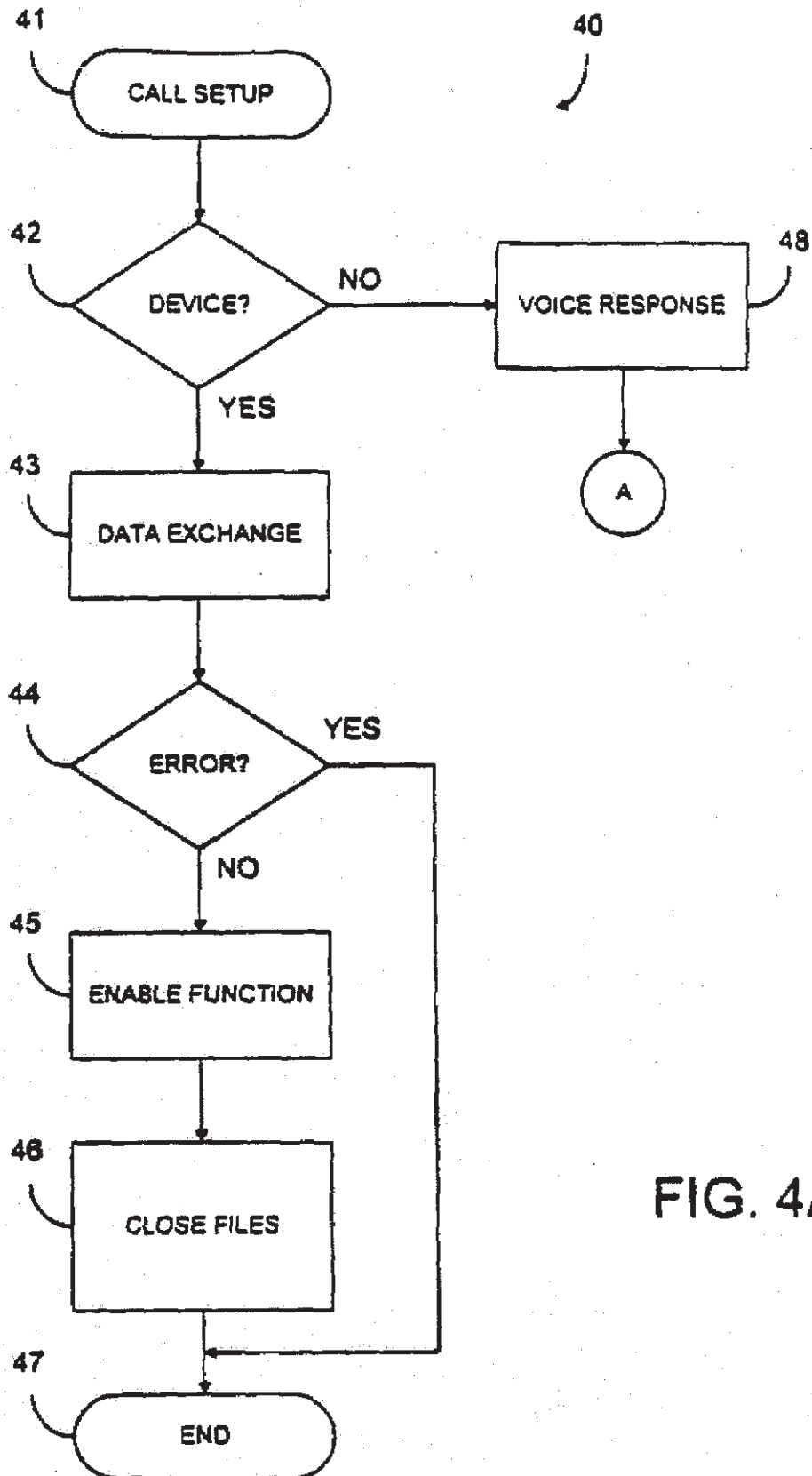


FIG. 4A

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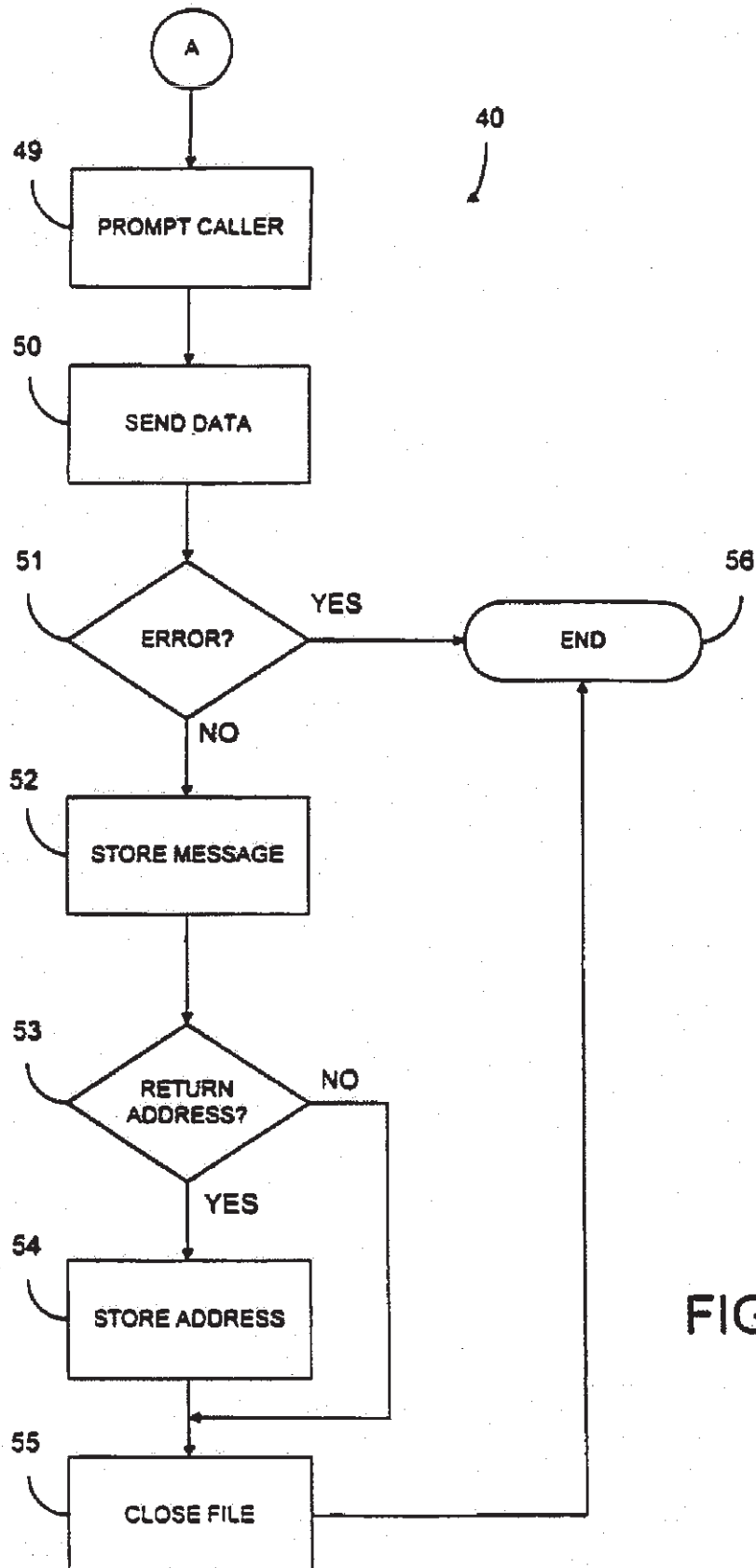


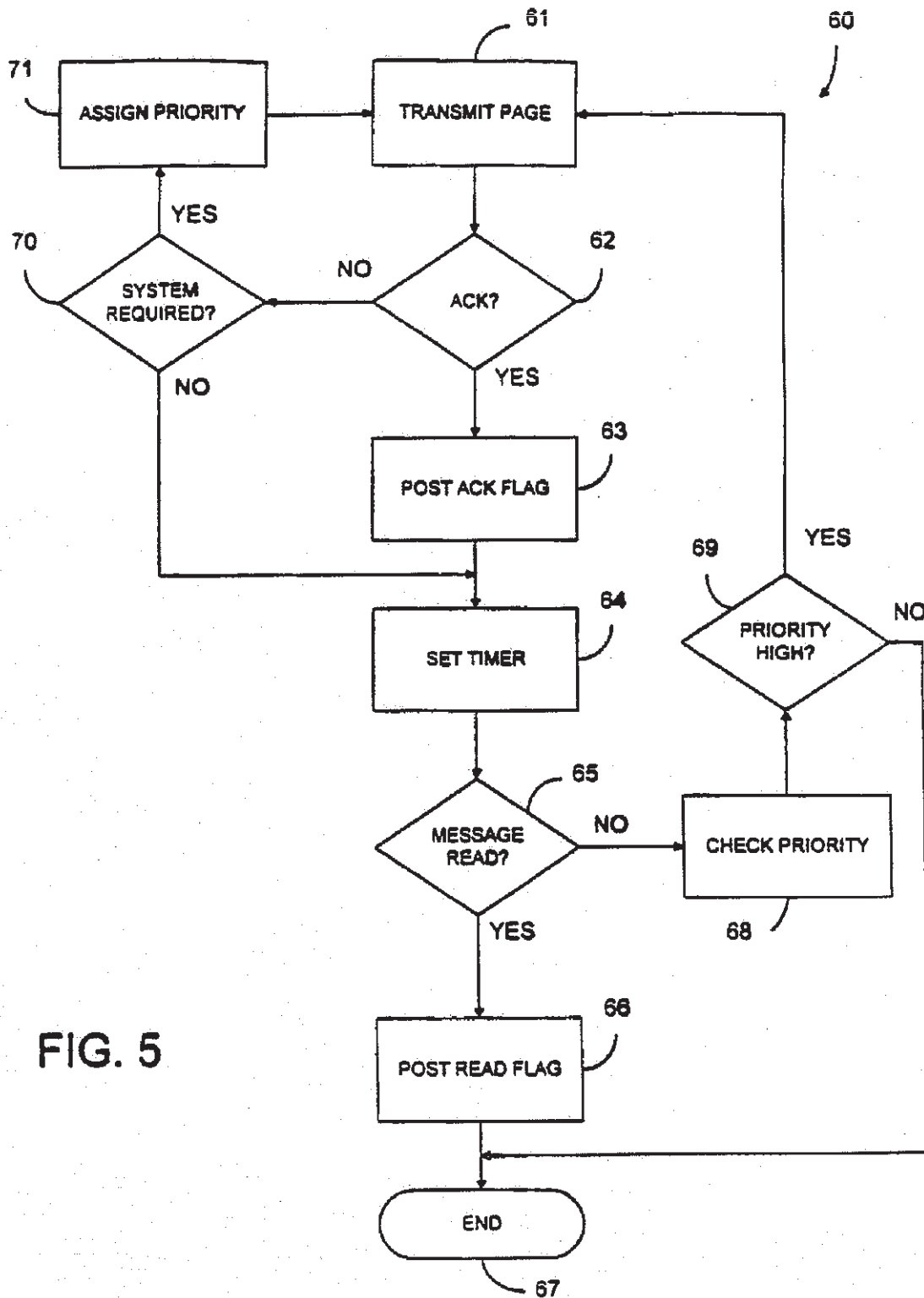
FIG. 4B

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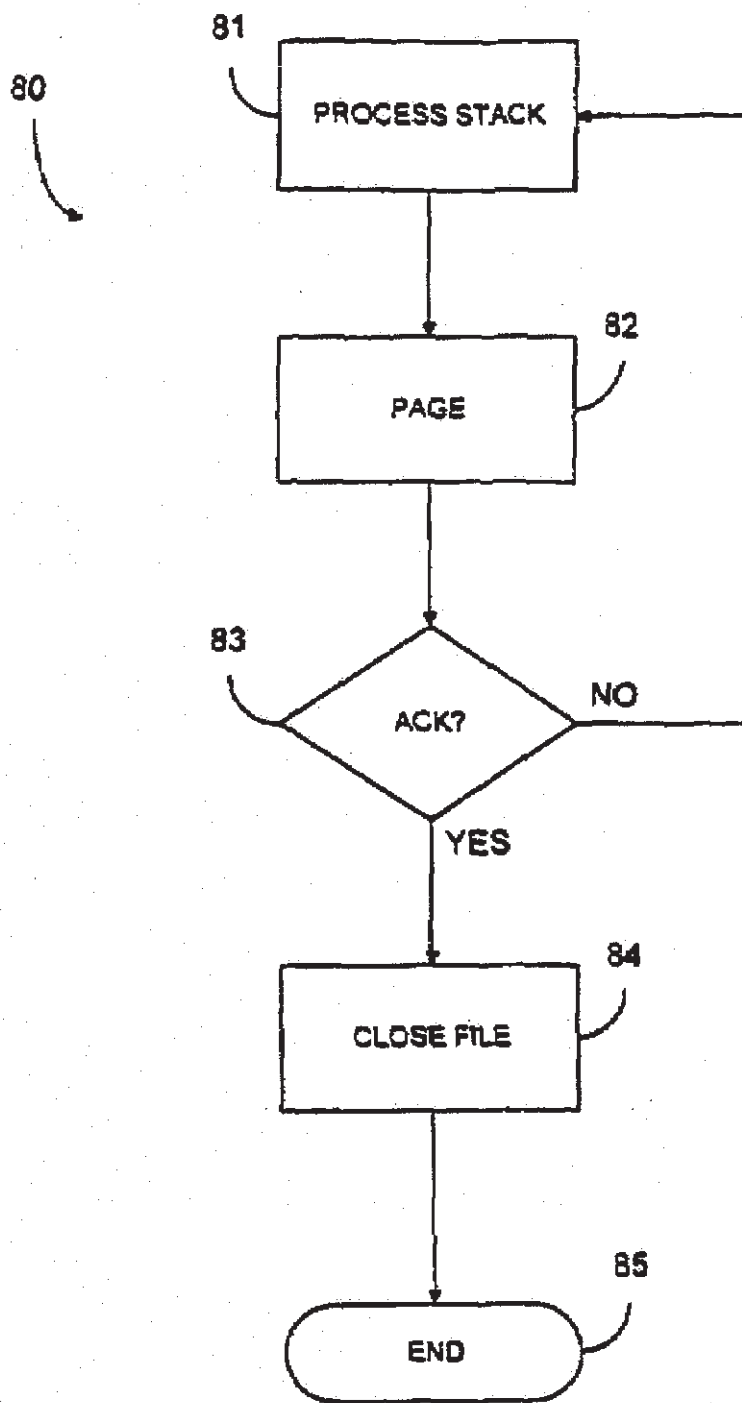


FIG. 6

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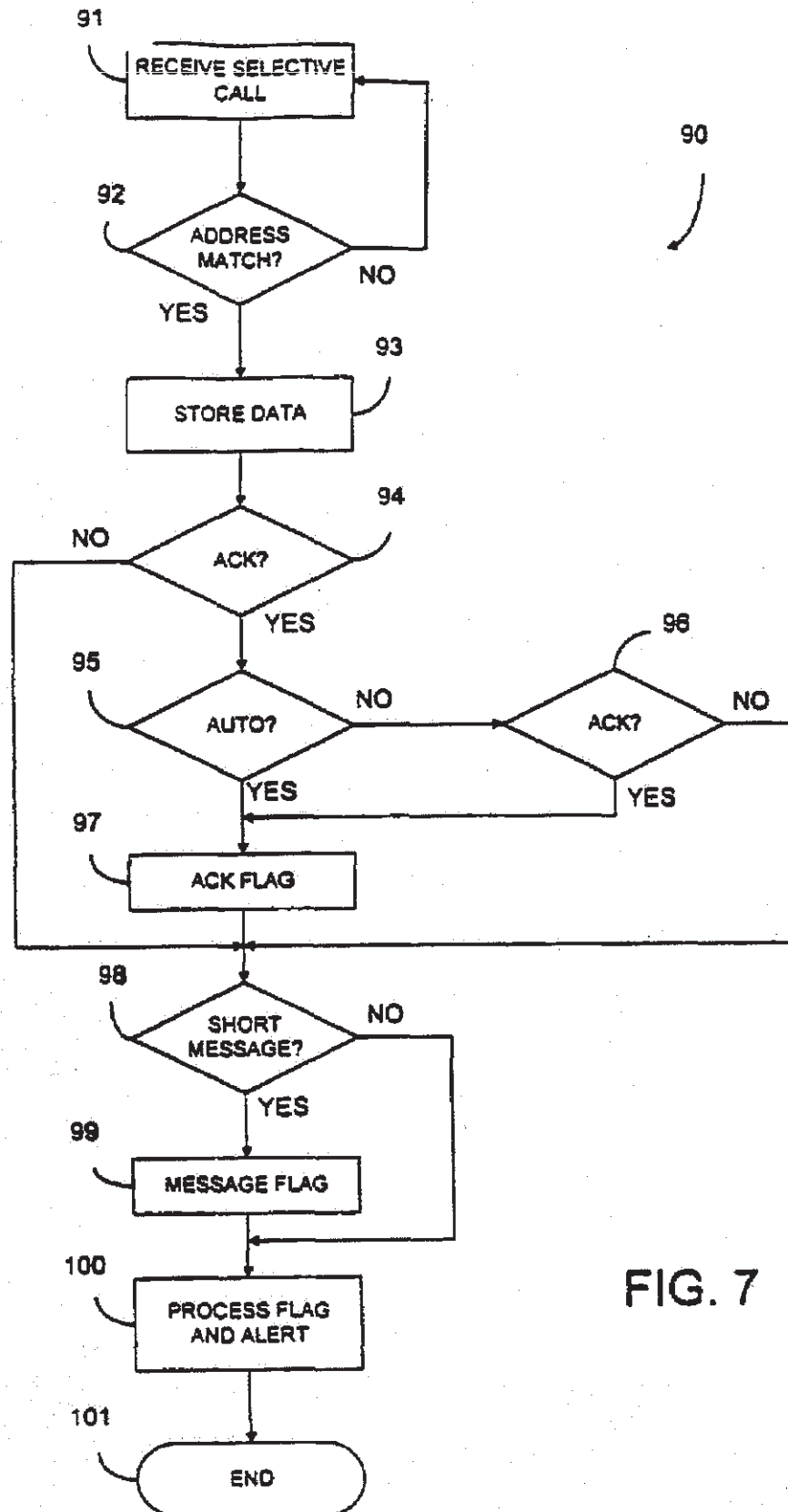


FIG. 7

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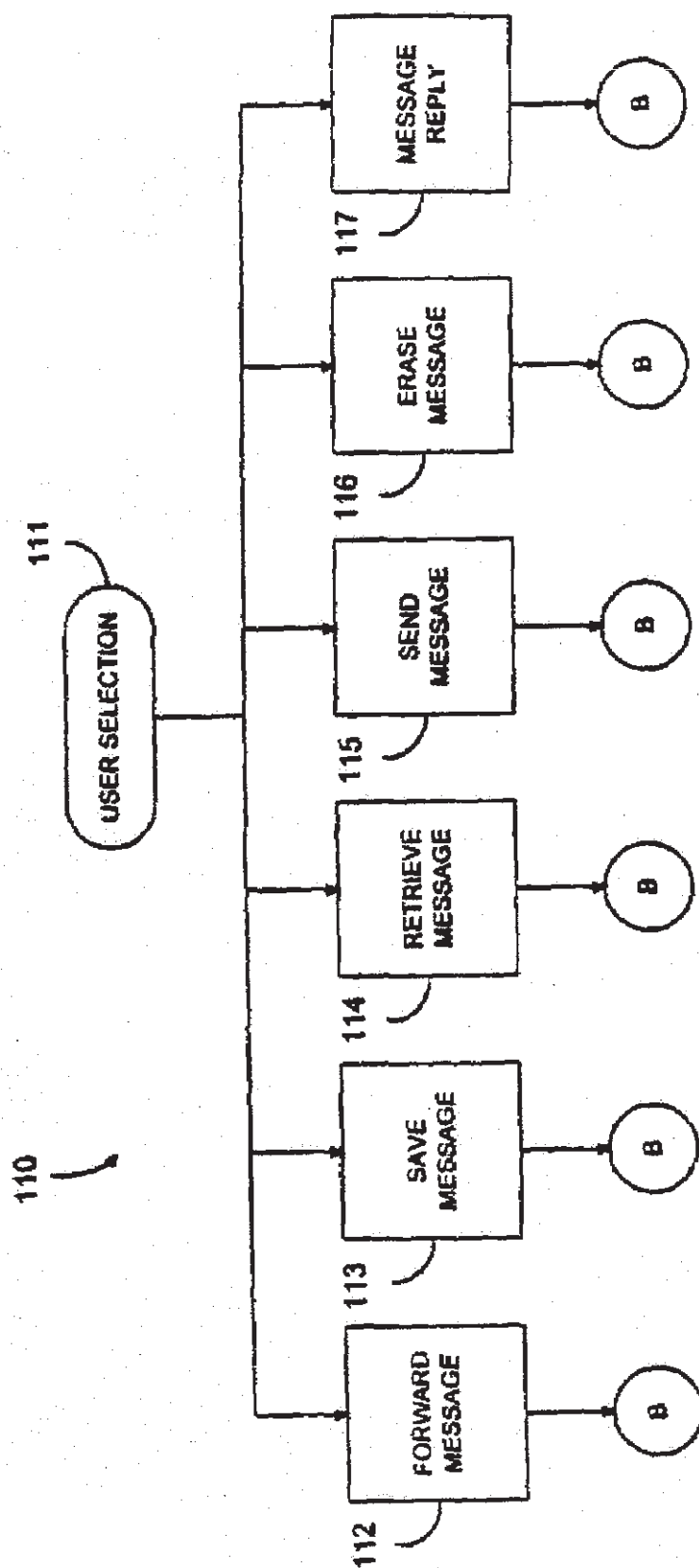


FIG. 8

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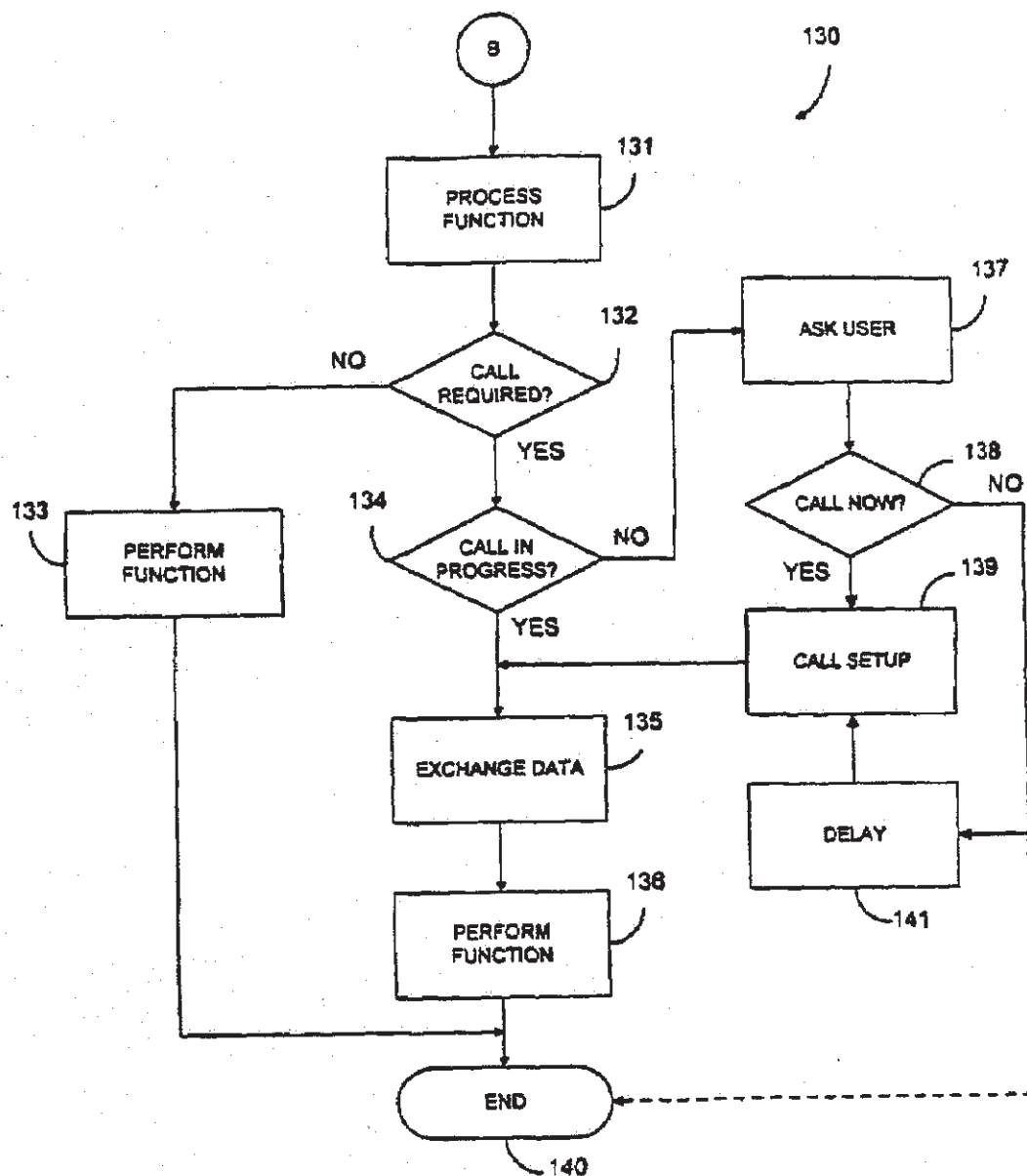


FIG. 9

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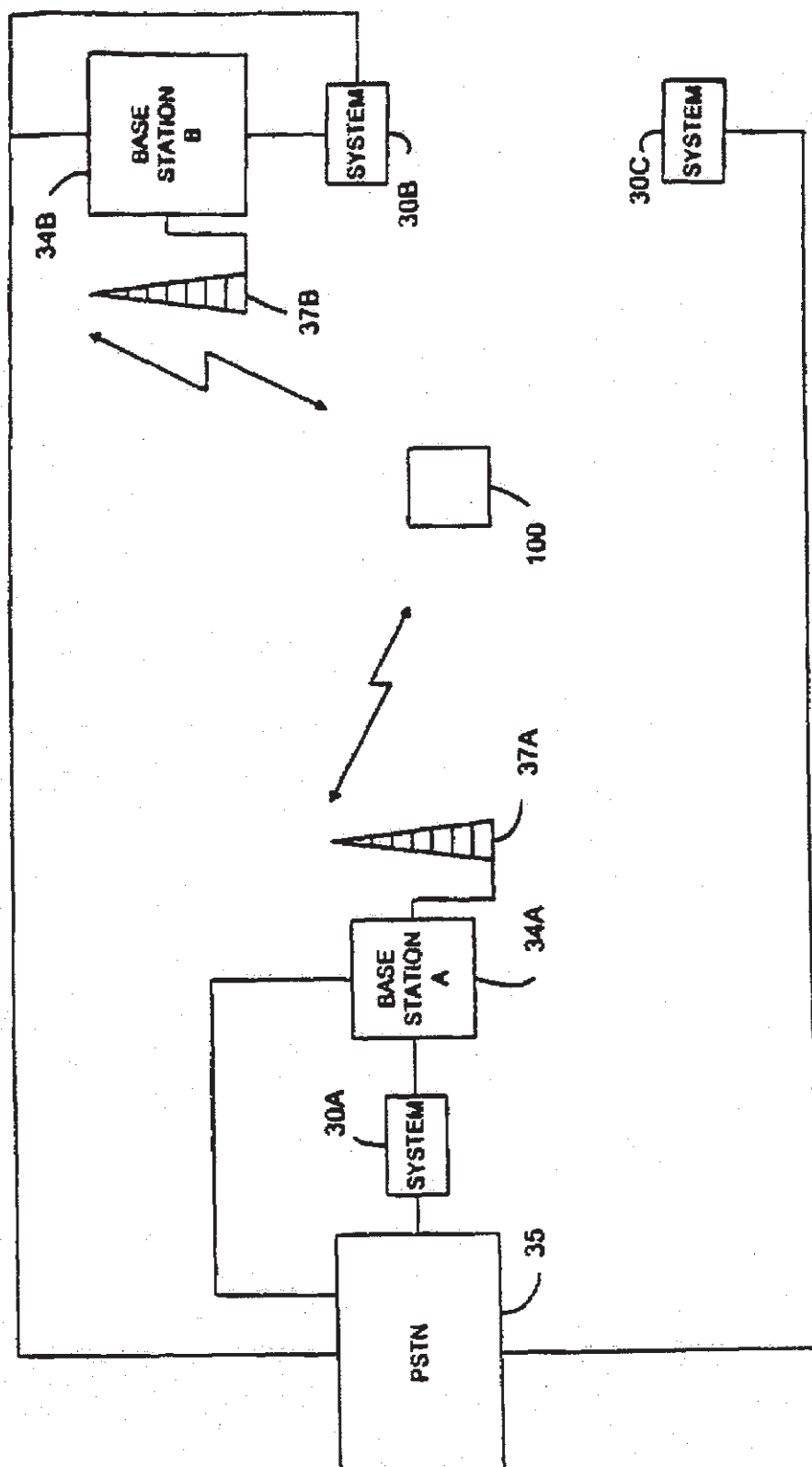


FIG. 10

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SYSTEM ID	TRANSCIVER(S) ID	MESSAGE ID	MESSAGE TYPE	MESSAGE LENGTH	MESSAGE PRIORITY	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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FIG. 11

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SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR ENABLING A USER OF A COMMUNICATION DEVICE TO MANAGE REMOTE INFORMATION

This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/688,321, filed on Oct. 13, 2000 now U.S. Pat. No. 7,003,304, which is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/934,143, filed on Sep. 19, 1997 (Now U.S. Pat. No. 6,233,430). The contents of the above referenced applications are incorporated herein by this reference.

RELATED APPLICATIONS

Reference is made to the following related issued patents: U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,259,892; 6,233,430; 6,087,956; 6,253,061; 6,462,646; 6,696,921 and 6,459,360.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to paging transceivers and methods for selectively acting on messages and, more particularly, to paging transceivers and methods for selectively retrieving messages.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In general, a paging receiver can be classified into one of four categories: an alert or tone only paging receiver, a numeric paging receiver, an alphanumeric paging receiver, or a voice paging receiver. One common characteristic of all of these paging receivers is that they monitor the air waves and notify the user then their particular address has been detected. For the alert or tone only paging receiver, the paging receiver would generate a tone or beep when its address is detected. The other paging receivers, upon detecting their address, would additionally store a message associated with the address signal and display or play it to the user. The message for a numeric paging receiver would be a set of numbers, typically the calling person's telephone number, and the message for an alphanumeric paging receiver would be a set of numbers and/or letters. The user of an alphanumeric paging receiver could therefore receive a message in the form of a telephone number with some descriptive text. For the voice paging receiver, the message that is stored is a voice message that the user can later play to hear the message.

A paging receiver is typically a rather small electronic device and, accordingly, has a limited amount of memory for storing messages that have been received from a base station in a paging system. Because of the relatively small size of the memory, the paging receiver can store only a limited number of messages. A user can delete messages from memory but will oftentimes desire to save a message, such as temporarily until the user makes a note of the message or until he or she is able to respond to the page. The messages that are saved in memory, however, reduce the space in memory that is available to receive new messages. This demand on space in memory is increasing as the size of the messages continue to grow and as users receive a greater number of messages. Although more memory can be added to accommodate more messages, the added cost and space needed for extra memory runs counter to the desires to keep the paging receiver small and inexpensive. A need therefore exists for a paging receiver which can display and/or play messages while efficiently using memory.

In addition to the demand on paging receiver memory, paging systems will be challenged as greater numbers of

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pages are being transmitted and as the size of the transmitted messages increases. Initially, when paging systems were only concerned with transmitting address signals of the paging receivers, the size of each transmission by the paging systems was relatively small. Paging receivers and paging systems, however, have undergone tremendous advances with paging systems now transmitting messages which can be hundreds of kilobytes or greater in size in addition to the address signals. Additionally, many paging receivers are actually paging transceivers which transmit acknowledgment signals back through the paging system. The capacity of the paging systems are therefore being challenged not only by messages of increasing sizes but also by reply signals transmitted from the paging transceivers to the paging system. The future of paging systems is therefore tied to the ability of the paging systems to control the number and size of the data transmissions and to provide additional features without sacrificing the quality of service to the user.

As discussed above, many paging transceivers are able to issue a reply or acknowledgment back to the base station in response to a received message. If the base station does not receive this reply or acknowledgment, then the base station assumes that the message has not been received and will repeatedly transmit the message until the reply or acknowledgment is received. Due to the high power levels at which the base station transmits its paging signals, the signals are usually easily received by all paging transceivers located within the coverage area of the base station antenna. The paging transceivers, on the other hand, must operate at lower power levels and often cannot transmit signals at sufficiently high levels to reach the base station. For example, when a paging transceiver is located in a basement of a building, in a subway, or in an airplane, the paging transceiver may be unable to issue a reply that can reach the base station. As a result, the base station may continue to transmit a page to a paging transceiver and the paging transceiver will continue to receive the message but the base station cannot detect the reply being issued by the paging transceiver. This unnecessary transmission of duplicate messages and the ineffectual reply signals transmitted by the paging transceivers consume valuable resources of the paging system and of the paging transceiver.

For safety reasons, a user may at times have to turn off his or her paging transceiver. For instance, when the user is on an airplane, the transmissions from the paging transceiver can interfere with the instrumentation or communication within the cockpit of the plane. The paging transceiver therefore should not be operating within the plane or around other electronic equipment that are sensitive to interference from the signals transmitted by the paging transceiver. As another example, if the user is in an environment that contains electronic detonators for explosive materials, the signals transmitted by the paging transceiver could possibly trigger an explosion. The user therefore must turn his or her paging transceiver off to ensure that it does not transmit any reply or acknowledgment signals in response to a received page. Although it may be dangerous for the pager transceiver to issue a reply signal in these situations, the signals transmitted by the base station may at times be safely received by the paging transceiver. Since the paging transceiver automatically issues a reply in response to a received message, the paging transceiver must nonetheless be turned off so as to not pose a risk to the user. During these times that the paging transceiver must be turned off, the user unfortunately is unable to receive any page or message. A need therefore exists for a paging transceiver that can notify a user of a

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message without automatically generating a reply message or acknowledgment to the base station.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention solves the problems described above with methods and systems for selective paging. A paging system notifies a paging transceiver that a message has been received but does not initially transmit the associated message. The user, upon being notified of the message, can then download the entire message at a time convenient to the user, which allows the user to download messages at less-expensive off-peak hours and allows the user to place the paging transceiver at a location where it can easily receive the message and reply to the message. Since the messages are not initially transmitted to the paging transceiver, the paging transceiver can receive and store a greater number of pages with minimal increase in the size of memory. Further, because entire messages are not automatically transmitted and since the user can position the paging transceiver to issue a sufficiently strong reply, traffic in the paging system can be controlled and actually reduced.

The system may transmit some identifying information about the page to the user without sending the entire message. For instance, the base station may identify the type of message, such as email, voice, or text, and also indicate the caller or other descriptive material about the message. The user can then determine the priority of the message and whether he or she wants to retrieve the message, play the message, erase the message, store the message, forward, reply, or otherwise act on the message. The user is also given control over the messages stored remotely from the paging transceiver and can erase or store these messages from the paging transceiver. The paging transceiver may have a timer for allowing the user to program the paging transceiver to perform a desired function on a message at a particular time.

The information initially sent to the user may also indicate the location of the stored message. For instance, the system paging a particular paging transceiver to notify it that a page has been received need not be the system actually storing the content of the message. Instead, a plurality of systems may store the contents of messages with one or more of the systems paging the paging transceiver. The paging transceiver would be provided sufficient information on the system storing the message so that it can communicate with this system. The system paging the paging transceiver can therefore act as a clearinghouse for other messaging systems by notifying a user of all messages received regardless of their source or type.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide paging transceivers and methods for paging that conserve memory in paging transceivers.

It is another object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for paging that conserve valuable air time.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for paging that provide users with remote control over their messages.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for paging that allow users to select when and how action should be taken on their messages.

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for notifying users of received messages.

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It is also an object of the present invention to provide paging transceivers and methods for providing control to users over messages stored at remote locations.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods that notify users of messages received from multiple sources.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and form a part of the specification, illustrate preferred embodiments of the present invention and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the invention. In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a paging transceiver according to a preferred embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a more detailed block diagram of the transceiver in the paging transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a communication system according to a preferred embodiment of the invention;

FIGS. 4A and 4B are flow charts depicting an exemplary set-up routine for establishing communications between the system of FIG. 3 and the transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a flow chart depicting a paging process;

FIG. 6 is a flow chart depicting a process of notifying a paging transceiver of an unread message;

FIG. 7 is a flow chart depicting a process of receiving a page at the paging transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 8 is a flow chart depicting a process of selecting a function at the paging transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 9 is a generic flow chart depicting a selective process performed at the paging transceiver of FIG. 1 for executing a desired function;

FIG. 10 is a block diagram of a paging system having multiple systems for storing messages; and

FIG. 11 is a diagram of a data transmission for the system in FIG. 10.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reference will now be made in detail to preferred embodiments of the invention, non-limiting examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. With reference to FIG. 1, a paging transceiver 100 according to a preferred embodiment of the invention comprises an antenna 1, a transceiver 2, a user interface 3, a controller 4, and a memory 5. The single antenna 1 is preferably used for both receiving and transmitting signals, although the paging transceiver 100 may comprise a separate antenna for transmitting signals and a separate antenna for receiving signals.

The transceiver 2 is connected to the antenna 1 and is for transmitting signals from the paging transceiver 100 and for receiving signals directed to the paging transceiver 100. The signals that may be transmitted to, or received from, the paging transceiver 100 include, but are not limited to, such signals as selective call signals, command data signals, signals corresponding to a message, and information data signals. The transceiver 2 may comprise a transceiver found in two way pagers or mobile radios and preferably comprises a transceiver commonly used in a portable mobile radiotelephone.

The transceiver 2 is connected to the user interface 3, which contains all necessary input and output devices. The user interface 3 includes a microphone, speaker, alert transducer, LED or LCD display, keypad, and necessary switches. The user interface 3 may also contain other types of input/output devices depending on the messaging appli-

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cation, such as a video display, camera, scanner, a printer, or a voice recognition device. The user interface 3 is not limited to these examples of user input/output devices but may comprise any input or output device which allows or assists communication between the user and the paging transceiver 100.

The transceiver 2 is connected to, and communicates with, the controller 4, which preferably comprises a digital signal processor (DSP) 4. The memory 5 is connected to the DSP 4 and is for storing messages or other types of information. The memory 5 may comprise static RAM, Dynamic RAM, Flash RAM, or any type of memory suitable for storing messages and allowing the retrieval of the messages. The amount of the memory 5 is preferably at least 4 MB for voice or text applications, although it may consist of a greater or lesser amount depending upon the specific message type application.

The transceiver 2, as shown in more detail in FIG. 2, includes an antenna interface 20 connected to the antenna 1. The antenna interface 20 directs signals received from antenna 1 to a receiver section 21 of the paging transceiver 100 and directs signals transmitted from a transmit section 24 to the antenna 1. The antenna interface 20 is preferably a duplexer, however an antenna switch or other device may be utilized to provide signal isolation between the receiver and transmitter sections 21 and 24. Alternatively, if paging transceiver 100 includes two antennas 1 with one for transmitting signals and the other for receiving signals, the transceiver 2 would not require any type of antenna interface 20.

The receive section 21 includes a receiver 22 and a receiver frequency synthesizer 23. The receiver 22 is connected to the antenna 1 through antenna interface 20 and receives the signals directed to the paging transceiver 100. The receiver frequency synthesizer 23, based on an input from a processor 27, selects the frequency at which the receiver 22 receives signals. The received signals are passed from the receiver 22 to the processor 27.

The transmit section 24 includes a transmitter 25 for receiving signals from the processor 27. The transmit section 24 also includes a transmitter frequency synthesizer 26 connected to the transmitter 25 which, based upon an input from the processor 27, selects the transmit frequency for the transmitter 25. The signals output by the transmitter 25 are supplied to the antenna interface 20 and then to the antenna 1.

The processor 27 comprises a central processing unit (CPU) having internal memory and switching capabilities. The CPU 27, for instance, comprises all necessary RAM and ROM memory, signal and data switching circuitry, signal processing circuitry, I-O Ports, and all standard program instructions and stored options commonly utilized in portable cellular telephones. The standard cellular telephone program instructions and CPU 27 may be obtained from a variety of suppliers. For instance, the instructions may be obtained from Wireless Link Inc. of Sunnyvale, Calif. and the CPU 27 from GEC Plessey Semiconductor, Inc. of Scotts Valley, Calif.

The DSP 4 includes necessary I-O and program memory and are commonly utilized in cellular telephones. Any suitable DSP may be used in the paging transceiver 100. Alternatively, the controller 4 may comprise another type of electronic device, such as a codec or digital-to-analog/analog-to-digital conversion circuit or other type of modulator-demodulator including memory interface circuitry coupled to message memory 5 for reading and writing of messages.

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The transceiver 2 also preferably includes a delay circuit 28. The delay circuit 28 may comprise a timer which informs the processor 27 of when a period of time has expired. The timer, for instance, may expire at a certain time of day, week, or month, or may expire a fixed period of time after a triggering event, such as one hour after the event. The time at which the timer 28 expires is preferably programmable through the user interface 3 and through processor 27. Additionally, the timer 28 preferably comprises a plurality of timers for notifying the processor 27 of when a plurality of different time periods have expired. Rather than a timer, the delay circuit 28 may alternatively operate to delay the occurrence of an event until a certain condition is satisfied. This condition, for instance, may be the strength of received signals or the receipt of a specified signal. The purpose of the timer 28 will become apparent from the description below.

With reference to FIG. 3, a system 30 according to a preferred embodiment of the invention is interconnected to a base station 34, both of which are connected to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) or to other telephone company equipment 35. The system 30 comprises a paging terminal controller 31 which may comprise a controller circuit and associated memory having a database of subscriber listings and corresponding selective call address fields. The paging terminal controller 31 communicates with storage and retrieval unit 32 and correlates messages with subscriber listings. The storage and retrieval unit 32 may comprise a CPU or control circuit, message information and program memory, memory interface circuitry and a DSP with appropriate operational code for storage and retrieval of the desired messages. The input/output controller 33 contains all necessary input and output circuitry such as encoders and decoders, modems and required routing and control circuitry for communicating with the paging terminal controller 31, the storage and retrieval unit 32, the PSTN 35, and the base station 34.

A call setup routine 40 for establishing communication between the system 30 and base station 34 will now be described with reference to FIGS. 4A and 4B. At step 41, a connection, such as a telephone connection, is routed through the PSTN 35 or in the case of paging transceiver 100 the switch 36, to the input/output controller 33. The input/output controller 33 determines at step 42 whether the connection is with an automated signaling device or with a person. If the connection is with a person, then at step 48 the storage and retrieval unit 32 is activated to produce one or more voice responses during the call in order to guide the person throughout the process.

If, at step 42, the input/output controller 33 determines that the call is from a device, such as a paging transceiver 100 or computer terminal, data is exchanged between the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 at step 43. The type of data that may be exchanged includes, but is not limited to, the following types of data: identification data, command data, and information data. The data supplied from the PSTN 35 may also be exchanged at step 43 with this data including data for identifying the caller and subscriber, such as, for example, Caller ID and DNIS (Dialed Number Identification Service). Additionally, the data may be extracted from the base station 34. For example, the location of the paging transceiver 100 may be determined from a home location registry (HLR) and the HLR data may be utilized by the system 30 in order to determine the location of the paging transceiver 100, as opposed to having the paging transceiver 100 supply the location information to system 30.

After data is exchanged at step 43, the system 30 determines at step 44 whether an error occurred during the

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transmission between the system 30 and paging transceiver 100. If an error did occur, then at step 47 the process ends and the paging transceiver 100 is informed of the error. The error is preferably presented to the user in the form of status information produced at the user interface 3, such as with an alert tone or visual display on the LED or LCD display. An error may include, but is not limited to, the following errors: "system busy," "wrong ID," or "bill over due." If no error is detected, as determined by the system 30 at step 44, a function is enabled and executed at step 45. The function, as will be described in greater detail below with reference to FIG. 8, may be selected by the user from a group of available functions. At step 46, housekeeping functions are performed both at the paging transceiver 100 and at the system 30 and the call is terminated at step 47.

If the call is from a person as determined at step 42, then the caller is provided with a voice response at step 48 and, with reference to FIG. 4B, the caller is then verbally prompted at step 49 to enter information. At step 50, the caller sends data to the system 30, such as by pressing the telephone keypad to generate DTMF tones. The data that may be sent by the caller includes, but is not limited to, ID code, pass code, mail box number, and subscriber number. The system 30 may respond to voice commands from a caller by utilizing a readily available voice recognition system, such as those presently in use by the telephone company to except collect calls. At 51, the system 30 determines whether an error has occurred. If an error is detected, the caller may be given an opportunity to correct the error or, as shown, the process may end at step 56. If no error was detected by the system 30 at step 51, a message, such as a voice message, is recorded and stored in the storage and retrieval unit 32 at step 52. At step 53, the system 30 determines whether a return receipt or a reply message is requested. If a return receipt or reply message is requested, the return address is entered by the caller or optionally issued by the system 30 and is stored by the system 30 in the storage and retrieval unit 32 at step 54. The system 30, for instance, may detect the address signal of the incoming call and, by default, store this number as the return address. After the return address is stored at step 54 or if a return address is not requested, the stored message is cross referenced to selective call data corresponding to the intended paging transceiver 100 at step 55. Also at step 55, a flag is set in a transmission stack file at the paging terminal controller 31 for subsequently transmitting selective call signals representative of the selective call data to the targeted paging transceiver 100. Housekeeping is performed by the system 30 and the call ends at step 56.

The base station 34, as shown in FIG. 3, comprises a switch 36, a transceiver antenna 37, and a transceiver base station 38. In response to a received message, the system 30 passes control information to switch 36 for setting up a page call. The switch 36, for instance, may be a mobile telephone switching office (MTSO) for interfacing to the transceiver base station 38. In the send page mode, selective call signals having an address associated with the paging transceiver 100 are transmitted. The address may be an address code for a paging transceiver, a mobile telephone number (MIN) for a mobile radiotelephone, or type of identifying information for a communication device.

Command data and information data may also be communicated from the system 30 to the paging transceiver 100 through the base station 34. The command data and information data shall hereinafter be referred to as CI data, examples of which include the following: paging transceiver location, forward message, retrieve message, reply to mes-

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sage, paging transceiver ID, message identifiers, retrieval instructions, save message, erase message, message type, message length, time/date message received, system 30 ID, system 30 location, message address, message location, battery life, message identifier, format code, compression type, message age, message priority, alert codes, energy saving commands, memory status, program data, provisioning data, acknowledgment data and requests, function codes, sender name, current time, number of messages, mailbox number, phone number, return address, alpha numeric short messages, general command requests, group calls, and signal strength.

The address and command data and information may be transmitted over any suitable communication system. For instance, the data may be communicated over a paging system, a cellular system having short message service capabilities, such as GSM-SMS, a Cellular Digital Packet Data (CDPD) system, Personal Communications Services, or any other type of mobile radiotelephone system or communication system. Furthermore, the paging transceiver 100 preferably is able to communicate over more than one system, such as with both a paging network and a mobile radiotelephone network.

With reference to FIG. 5, a flow diagram 60 for performing a page call is shown. At step 61, the system 30 locates the current message flag from its transmission stack within paging terminal controller 31 and communicates with base station 34 for setting up a page call. The base station 34 transmits selective call signals and CI data to the targeted paging transceiver 100. At step 62, the system 30 determines whether an acknowledgment (Ack) was received from the paging transceiver 100 indicating that the page call was received. If an acknowledgment was not received, then at step 70 the system 30 determines whether an acknowledgment is a system 30 option. If an acknowledgment is required, then at step 71 the system 30 assigns the page call a priority in the transmission stack and eventually returns to step 61 for re-transmission. If the acknowledgment is received at step 62, the system 30 sets an acknowledgment flag (Ack flag) corresponding to the stored message.

If an acknowledgment is not a system requirement, as determined at step 70, or after posting the acknowledgment flag at step 63, the system 30 sets a timer at step 64 and waits a period of time before proceeding to step 65. At step 65, the paging terminal controller 31 determines if the stored message has been read. If the message has been read, then at step 66 the system 30 posts a read flag in the subscriber data base to indicate that the message was delivered and read and at step 67 the process ends.

If, at step 65, the message had not been read, then at step 68 the system 30 determines the priority of the message and proceeds to step 69. If the priority is high, as determined at step 69, then at step 61 the page call is returned to the transmission stack at the designated priority level for re-transmission. If, on the other hand, the priority is not high as determined at step 69, then the message has a low priority and the process ends at step 67.

An alternate routine 80 for notifying a paging transceiver 100 that an unread message is waiting is shown in FIG. 6. At step 81, the paging terminal controller 31 sorts through subscriber listings which have a corresponding unread and unnotified message in the storage and retrieval unit 32 and sends a page request to base station 34. At step 82, the switch 36 checks a home location registry (HLR) to determine the registered location and status of the remote paging transceiver 100. A page call is processed by transmitting selective call signals from transceiver base station 37 at step 82. If a

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page acknowledgment is desired for verification that the paging transceiver 100 recipient received the selective call signals, an Ack signal is manually or automatically transmitted from the paging transceiver 100 to base station 34 for storage in the subscriber database of paging terminal controller 31 at step 82.

At step 83, if an acknowledgement signal was received, a notified flag is set in the subscriber data base corresponding to the unread message stored in the storage and retrieval unit 32 and the paging process for the current unread message ends at step 84. If at step 83 an acknowledgment signal was not received, the message is assigned a new priority and the process is subsequently repeated. Optionally, a plurality of priorities may be assigned to acknowledged and not acknowledged unread messages so that the paging transceiver 100 is sent a number of calls until the message is read by the subscriber.

In the preferred embodiment, the base station 34 is part of a mobile radiotelephone network and the paging transceiver 100 is paged over the designated paging channel or the control channels of the network. In addition to paging the paging transceiver 100, the short messages or other data transmitted to the paging transceiver 100 is also preferably transmitted over the paging channel or control channels. Although the paging is preferably performed through a mobile radiotelephone network, the selective call signals may alternatively be routed to a paging system for transmitting an address code and CI data over an independent paging transmitter. In such a configuration, the paging transceiver 100 may be configured to have a separate paging receiver or transceiver compatible with the paging transmitter or paging transceiver. Since radio pager devices require much less energy than portable cellular telephones, a paging transceiver 100 configured with a low energy paging receiver would reduce energy required for receiving selective call signals and allow high energy circuitry of the paging transceiver 100 to be turned off until the user needs to retrieve or transmit messages. Other variations and modifications will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

A process 90 for receiving messages at a paging transceiver 100 is shown in FIG. 7. A selective call signal including an address is received by receive section 21 of the transceiver 100 at step 91. At step 92, the demodulated signal is processed by the CPU 27 to compare the received address with an address code stored in the CPU 27 memory. If the received address code does not match the stored address, flow returns to step 91 and the transceiver 100 continues to monitor transmissions for its address. When the address corresponds to the pre-stored address code, as determined at step 92, the CPU 27 stores and processes any corresponding received CI data at step 93.

Next, at step 94, the CPU 27 determines if an acknowledgment transmission is required by the paging transceiver 100. The CPU 27 may always enable an acknowledgment in order to confirm at the system 30 or base station 34 that the selective call signals were received by the targeted paging transceiver 100. Alternatively, the CPU 27 may never enable an acknowledgment from the transceiver 100, which is useful in explosive environments where transmissions are dangerous and in environments where a reply from the paging transceiver 100 may cause harmful interference to other electronic equipment. The CPU 27 may, as another option, enable an acknowledgment only when acknowledgment data is contained within the received CI data, such as with a remote request. Finally, the CPU 27 may enable an acknowledgment in response to a user-enabled command.

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Returning to step 94, if the paging transceiver 100 allows for an acknowledgment then at step 95 the CPU 27 determines whether the acknowledgment is required or if the acknowledgment is a user option. If the acknowledgment is required to be automatic, then an acknowledgment flag is set at step 97. If, on the other hand, the acknowledgment is not automatic but rather optional, then at step 96 the CPU 27 determines whether an acknowledgment has been enabled. If the acknowledgment has been enabled, then the acknowledgment flag is set in step 97.

At step 98, the CPU 27 determines whether short messages may be transmitted. Short messages may include CI data or any type of short coded message which was pre-stored by the user in the paging transceiver 100. If short messages are enabled, at step 99 the CPU 27 sets the short message flag. At step 100, the paging transceiver 100 transmits all flagged data, including CI data, to the base station 34 for processing by the system 30. The CPU 27 generates status information corresponding to received CI data and passes any necessary user status information to the user interface 3 for visual and/or audible reception by the user. For example the user may hear an alert beep, feel an alert vibration, view an LCD indicating the number of unread messages, view an animated graphic display, hear a synthesized voice indicating that an urgent message is waiting, or receive other types of indications. At step 101, the CPU 27 performs house keeping functions and the routine ends.

FIG. 8 depicts a user function flow diagram 110 for user selectable function requests at the paging transceiver 100. At step 111, the user selects a function to be performed from available functions 112 to 117. These functions are exemplary functions that may be available and additional functions may exist. One or more of these functions are preferably selected through the user interface 3. One or more messages may be selected by the user to be forwarded to one or a plurality of addresses or recipients at step 112. Items such as messages and send message lists may be selected by scrolling through the message number or name. The selected messages for forwarding may reside at the paging transceiver 100 or at the system 30. The user may also select the function of saving a selected message at step 113. At step 114, selected messages are retrieved for reproduction and/or storage. At step 115, messages may be sent to one or a plurality of recipients, such as to another paging transceiver 100. At step 116, the selected message may be erased and at step 117, a reply may be sent to the originator of a selected message. With any of the functions selected at steps 112 to 117, the system 30 may act upon the entire information or, alternatively, may instead operate on only the message identifier. For instance, if the user selected the desired action of forwarding a message, the system 30 may send the entire message to a designated recipient or may instead send just the message identifier.

FIG. 9 depicts processing performed by the paging transceiver 100 in response to the selection of any one of the functions 112 to 117 shown in FIG. 8. At step 131, the function is identified by the CPU 27 and other processing occurs prior to step 132 where the CPU 27 determines whether a call is required. If a call is not required to perform the function, then at step 133 the CPU 27 performs the requested function and the process ends at step 140.

If, on the other hand, a call is required, then at step 134 the CPU 27 next determines whether a call is already in progress. If a call is in progress, the CPU 27 exchanges data with the system 30 and base station 34 at step 135 and the function is performed or executed at step 136. The data that

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is exchanged at step 135 includes a request signal that is sent from the paging transceiver 100 to the system 30 specifying the desired action and the particular information or message. If a call is not in progress, then at step 137 the CPU 27 preferably asks the user if a call should be made and receives the user's feedback at step 138. If the user elects not to call, then a delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28.

As discussed above, the delay circuit 28 may be a timer which expires at a set time, such as at 1:00 a.m., when traffic and costs are low or may expire after a period of time, such as 1 hour. The set time or the period of time may be programmed by the user or may be determined by default values. Additionally, the delay circuit 28 may operate to delay operation until the signal strength is above a certain threshold. The delay circuit 28, in this example, may therefore comprise a level detector and a comparator circuit for comparing the signal strength to the threshold level. The delay circuit 28 would therefore advantageously delay the paging transceiver 100 from initiating communication until signal strength is sufficiently high. Moreover, the delay circuit 28 may alternatively comprise a communication monitor circuit for determining when the paging transceiver 100 is communicating before performing a function. Also, the delay circuit 28 may detect transmissions and trigger a certain event in response to a received communication. As an example, if the paging transceiver 100 receives a certain type of message or a message from a particular source or individual, the paging transceiver 100 may automatically perform a programmed action. The paging transceiver 100 would therefore be able, for instance, to automatically forward all messages received from one recipient to a designated person.

After the timer 28 is triggered or if the user decides to call now, then at step 139 the CPU 27 sets up a call to the base station 34. Once a call is established, then processing proceeds to step 135 for the exchange of data and then to step 136 for the performance or execution of the function. At step 140, the process ends. The process shown in FIG. 9 is not limited to the performance of a single function but also represents the processing if the user selects a number of functions. For example, the user may select the functions of retrieving a message at step 114 and forwarding a message at step 112 and these functions may be performed in unison with each other or sequentially one after the other.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 may exchange status information during messaging calls initiated by the paging transceiver 100 or by selective call, such as page calls, initiated by the system 30. The status information may contain information corresponding to messages stored within the paging transceiver 100 or within the system 30. For example, if the system 30 erases a message that has resided in its memory for too long a period of time, such as an unsaved, read message, the system 30 may inform the paging transceiver 100 that the message no longer exists. If the message identifier stored in the paging transceiver 100 no longer corresponds to a message stored in the system 30 or in the paging transceiver 100, the CPU 27 removes the identifier for the no-longer existing message.

When the forward message function 112 is selected, flow proceeds to step 131 where the CPU 27 reads information pertaining to the message or plurality of messages selected by the user to be forwarded. The information may include a message identifier, location data, message length, message type, destination addresses, or other CI type data as previously described. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines whether the message cannot be forwarded without communicating with the system 30. At step 134, the CPU 27

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determines if a call is in progress. If a call is in progress, CI data is exchanged at step 135 with the system 30 for forwarding messages. If the messages to be forwarded are located at the system 30, the messages are simply flagged for forwarding to the appropriate addresses. At step 136, the messages are forwarded and confirmation is communicated to the paging transceiver 100. If the message is not located at system 30, the message is transmitted from the paging transceiver 100 to system 30 at step 136 and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134, it is determined that a call is not in progress, the user is asked if the message should be forwarded now at step 137. If at step 138 the user selects yes, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. If at step 138 the user responds that a call should not be made, the CPU 27 keeps the forwarding information in memory for forwarding the message during a subsequent call with system 30 and a delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28, as described above. After the delay, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. The process ends at step 140.

In operation, the user selects a message or messages to be forwarded and also selects a recipient for receiving the message. If the message resides at the system 30, the message is simply forwarded to the addressed recipient. If the message is located in the paging transceiver 100, the message is first transmitted to the system 30 at step 135 before it can be forwarded to the intended recipient. In order to conserve time, the system 30 will not accept receipt of a message from the paging transceiver 100 if the same message already exists at the system 30. The system 30 will simply perform the required function with the already present duplicate message.

If the function selected is the save message function 113, then at step 131 the message identifier to be saved is read by CPU 27. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines if the message identifier selected corresponds to a message already stored in message memory 5 and if the selected function can be processed off-line. If yes, at step 133 the CPU 27 sets a save message flag in order to protect the message stored in message memory 5 from being over-written and the process ends at step 140.

If at step 132 the CPU 27 determines that the message is not stored at the paging transceiver 100, then at step 134 the CPU 27 determines whether a call is in progress. If a messaging call is in progress, CI data instructing the system 30 to save the message is sent. The system 30 flags the stored message and sends a message saved acknowledgment to the paging transceiver 100 at step 136. The CPU 27 converts the acknowledgment to status information and informs the user that the message is saved at the system 30 and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134, it is determined that the paging transceiver 100 is not currently in communication with the system 30, the CPU 27 flags the message identifier for saving and the user is asked if the call should be made now at step 137. If no, at step 138 the flag is kept for transmission to system 30 at a later time. A delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28 as described above. After the delay, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. Transmission to system 30 may also take place at a later time, such as during a selective call to the paging transceiver 100 or during a messaging call to system 30. If yes, then the CPU 27 sets up a call at step 139 for transmitting the save flag and CI data as previously described.

When the retrieve message function is selected at 114, then at step 131 the message identifiers corresponding to

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messages to be returned are read from the CPU 27 memory for retrieving the message. Additionally, the CPU 27 may read message location information, system ID information, address information, message length information, and/or message type information as previously described. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines the location of the message and determines if a call to system 30 is required. If the message is stored in message memory 5, then at step 133 the CPU 27 retrieves the message. The message, for instance, may be an audio message, visual message, text message, or electronic signal intended to be transferred to another device.

At step 132, if the message does not reside in message memory 5, the CPU 27 determines that a call is required to retrieve the message and, at step 134, determines if a call is in progress. If a call is in progress, CI data, such as which messages to retrieve, message length, message type, and message identifier, is exchanged at step 135. At step 136, the message is retrieved and simultaneously stored in message memory 5 by the DSP 4. The appropriate status information corresponding to the message is stored by the CPU 27 in its memory and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134 a call is not in progress, the user is asked if the call should be made now or if during another call at step 137. At step 138, if the user chooses to place the call, the call is set up at 139. If the user chooses to delay the call at step 141 until another session or some later time, the message is left flagged for retrieval at the next session or some later time and the process ends at step 140. With the timer 28, the message may be retrieved at a chosen time or a retrieval instruction may be sent from system 30 to paging transceiver 100 for causing the paging transceiver 100 to automatically retrieve a message or plurality of messages at a time designated by system 30. For example it may be desirable to have emergency weather information automatically retrieved during nighttime hours when telephone line charges and air time charges are less expensive. The above described options may also be utilized for forwarding messages, erasing messages, saving messages, sending messages, and replying to messages as will be shown in more detail hereinafter.

With the send message function 115, in order to send a message, the message must first be stored at the paging transceiver 100 or at the system 30. The process of storing or recording messages is well known to those of ordinary skill in the art and accordingly will not be described in further detail. Examples of these devices are described in U.S. Pat. No. 4,602,129 to Matthew, et al., titled "Electronic Audio Communications System With Versatile Message Delivery," and in U.S. Reissued Pat. No. Re. 34,976 to Helferich et al, titled "Analog/Digital Voice Storage Cellular Telephone," both of which are incorporated herein by reference. The system 30 and paging transceiver 100 can record, store and retrieve a plurality of different types of messages as previously described depending on the application required.

If the send message function 115 is selected, the CPU 27 identifies the message to be sent and cross references it to the selected recipient address information. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines whether a call is required. The subsequent processing of sending a message should be apparent from the description above for forwarding a message and accordingly will not be duplicated in order to simplify description of the invention. The message to be sent may reside in the paging transceiver 100 or in the system 30. If the message resides in the system 30 and in the paging transceiver 100, the message in the system 30 corresponding to the CPU 27 message identifier will be sent in order to conserve air time. If the message does not reside in system 30, the message will be sent from the paging transceiver 100 to the system 30. If

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the message is to be sent from the paging transceiver 100, the message may be a pre-stored message or alternatively, the message may be transmitted to system 30 by paging transceiver 100 in real time during a call session between system 30 and paging transceiver 100.

If the erase message function is selected at step 116, the erase message function allows a user to erase messages stored at the system 30 or at the paging transceiver 100 depending on the mode of operation. A message may be erased at a paging transceiver 100 without erasing the message identifier. If a message is erased at the paging transceiver 100 and the identifier still exists in message memory 5, the message can be retrieved from the system 30. In order to remove a message identifier at the paging transceiver 100, the message must be erased at the system 30. This feature causes the user to manage the messages at the platform, thereby conserving memory space at the storage and retrieval unit 32. At step 131, the selected message to be erased is identified and the user is asked if the selected message in the paging transceiver is to be erased or if both copies of the message are to be erased. If the local message only is selected to be erased, the message identification information is kept and at step 133 the CPU 27 flags the message stored in memory 5 for erasure or over-writing. In other words, the message still exists but may be overwritten by another message when memory space is required and, until then, may be retrieved from message memory 5. If at step 132 a decision was made to erase both copies of the message, then at step 134 the CPU 27 determines if a call is in progress. If yes, at step 135 the CI data is exchanged instructing system 30 to erase the message. At step 131, the system 30 transmits an acknowledgment that the message was erased, the CPU 27 flags the local message for erasure, the identifier is removed and both copies of the message and the identifiers are erased.

If at step 134 the CPU 27 determines that a call is not in progress, the CPU 27 at step 137 erases the local message and the user is asked if the system 30 copy of the message needs to be erased now. If the user responds yes at step 138, the call is established at step 139 and the process continues as previously described. If the user responds no at step 138, the necessary flags are set for erasing the remote message during the next communication with system 30 after the delay of step 141 and the timer 28 is activated. The timer 28 may be utilized for a timed erase of the message stored at system 30.

The message reply function 117 is for sending a reply to an already received message. A reply message utilizes the same process as the send message function except that a return address is already correlated to the message targeted for a reply. During the send message function 115, the user is required to select an address or destination for the message to be sent. In other words, the user must know the destination or address in advance. The message reply function 117 does not require that the user know the address of the recipient because the message being replied to has a corresponding return address. As with the send message function 115, a reply message may be sent in real time or it may be pre-recorded and stored in the paging transceiver 100 for transmission to system 30. Additionally, the reply transmission may be delayed for a set period of time as previously described with timer 28.

In summary, as discussed above with reference to FIGS. 5 and 6, the system 30 does not transmit the entire message to the paging transceiver 100 but rather notifies the user that a message is waiting. The paging transceiver 100, as discussed above with reference to FIG. 7, stores data associated

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with the page and possibly a short message. The user can then select a desired one of plurality of available functions, such as those shown in FIG. 8, and the paging transceiver 100 will process the request in accordance with FIG. 9.

With the system 30 and paging transceiver 100, the paging transceiver 100 can notify a user of a message without receiving the entire message. The user can then decide to act upon the message at a time convenient to the user. Rather than receiving the message with the alert, as occurs with conventional paging receivers, the user can control the time when he or she wants to receive a message and may even decide not to retrieve the message. After the user has been notified, the user can then control the paging transceiver 100 to retrieve the message from the system 30, to save the message at either the system 30 or paging transceiver 100, to forward the message to an indicated recipient, to reply to the message, or to erase the message from the paging transceiver 100 or from the system 30.

With paging transceiver 100, the user can position the paging transceiver in a desired location before initiating communication with the system 30. Thus, if the user is paged by system 30 while the user is in a subway, basement, or on an airplane, the user can postpone the delivery of the message until the paging transceiver 100 is in a better location to receive and reply to the message. Similarly, the user may be in an explosive environment or near sensitive electronic equipment and may postpone delivery of the message and a reply from the paging transceiver 100 until the user is out of the explosive environment or far enough away from the sensitive electronic equipment. The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 therefore give the user control over the messages stored in the system 30.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 conserve both valuable air time and also paging transceiver message memory 5. The system 30 does not automatically deliver each message to the intended paging transceiver 100 but instead allows the user to exercise control over the message. Since a message may be many bytes in length, perhaps kilobytes, megabytes, or even greater, the benefit to the system 30 and to the base station 34 in not having to transmit each message can be quite substantial. Also, since each message is not automatically delivered to the paging transceiver 100, the paging transceiver 100 does not become overloaded with messages and instead the user can choose to act on selective messages, such as by retrieving only certain messages. The user, additionally, may decide not to act on any of the messages through base station 34 and may call the system 30 through the PSTN 35, thereby bypassing the base station 34 and its associated charges and expenses.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 are not limited to voice messages in a paging system. Rather, the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 may operate with any type of message or information, including, but not limited to numeric messages, alphanumeric messages, voice or other audio messages, video messages, graphics or even data. The paging transceiver 100 may be a separate paging transceiver, may be integral with a mobile radiotelephone, or may be incorporated into other devices.

For instance, the paging transceiver 100 may be integrated into a portable radio, CD, or tape player. The paging transceiver 100 could receive messages from system 30 which indicate portions of songs that may be sampled by the user. The user may browse through a listing of available music and select a desired song. The paging transceiver 100 then communicates with the system 30 to retrieve the selected song and the user can then play the song at the paging transceiver 100.

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As another example, the messages may be video messages which the user can browse through and select only desired messages. The paging transceiver 100 may be integral with a television set and the video messages may be promotions for new movies or shows. Alternatively, the paging transceiver 100 may be integral with a game console and the video messages may be clips of new games that are available with that game console. Other applications for the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The information or message available to a paging transceiver 100 need not be static but instead may be dynamic. In other words, when a paging transceiver 100 is alerted that information is available, the information may be updated or otherwise change from the time that the user was alerted. As an example, the user may receive a weather alert and by the time the user decides to receive the information the information would be updated to reflect current weather conditions. The identifier for the information therefore does not limit the content that may be stored as the information available to the user.

The system 30 is not limited to transmitting only one alert at a time to one paging transceiver 100. Instead, the system 30 may send a plurality of alerts to a single paging transceiver 100 and each of those alerts may be broadcast to a plurality of paging transceivers 100. For instance, the system 30 may broadcast information to a plurality of transceivers 100 that share a common set of numbers within their mobile identification numbers. If the system 30 sends a plurality of alerts to a paging transceiver 100, these alerts may be displayed by the user interface 3 and the user can scroll through and act upon the messages as desired.

As discussed above, the system 30 and paging transceiver 100 allows information to be remotely acted upon by the paging transceiver 100. The system 30, however, also allows users access to their information via conventional ways, such as the PSTN 35. Therefore, a user may receive the alert with a paging transceiver 100 and decide to call in through the PSTN 35 to listen or otherwise act upon the message. The system 30 preferably is connected to the Internet whereby users can also gain access and act upon their information via the Internet.

The paging transceiver 100 preferably alerts the user both when a message identifier signal has been received and when complete messages have been received. The alerts may comprise any suitable indication to inform the user that the paging transceiver 100 has received a communication, such as a tone, vibration, or visual display. The alerts for a received identifier and for a received message are preferably different so as to allow a user to easily differentiate between the two communications.

The example provided in FIG. 3 was a single system 30 for storing messages on behalf of a plurality of paging transceivers 100. The invention, however, may include any number of systems 30 for storing messages with each system 30 storing information for a transceiver 100 being considered a content provider. For instance, as shown in FIG. 10, a messaging system 200 may comprise a plurality of systems 30 connected to the PSTN 35 with system 30A being associated with base station 34A and transceiver antenna 37A and system 30B being associated with base station 34B and transceiver antenna 37B. Although three systems 30 are shown, the system 200 may include any number of systems 30 and, although two base stations 34 are shown, each system 30 may be associated with a base station 34 and transceiver antenna 37 or only one of the systems 30 may be associated with a base station 34 and transceiver antenna 37.

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Furthermore, each system 30 need not include a paging terminal controller 31 or a storage unit 32. System 30C, for instance, may include a storage and retrieval unit 32 and input/output controller 33 but not a paging terminal controller 31 and may page the paging transceiver 100 through the paging terminal controller 31 in system 30A. Conversely, a system 30, such as system 30A, may include a paging terminal controller 31 and an input/output controller 33 but not a storage and retrieval unit 32. Further, the input/output controller 33 need not be a separate unit but may be incorporated into the paging terminal controller 31 if the system 30 does not include a storage and retrieval unit 32, or into the storage and retrieval unit 32, if the system 30 does not include a paging terminal controller 31. The systems 30 and base stations 34 may communicate with each other through the PSTN 35 or through links or lines other than or in addition to the PSTN 35, such as through an SS7 backbone of a wireless network or through the Internet.

Additionally, each of the base stations 34A and 34B may be part of a paging network but are preferably part of a cellular network. Either one or both of base stations 34A or 34B may page the paging transceiver and either one or both of the base stations 34A or 34B may deliver the contents of messages to the paging transceiver. Each of the systems 30A, 30B, and 30C may store messages on behalf of a user with the messages being of the same or different types. Furthermore, the messages stored within a single system 30 may be all the same type or may differ from each other.

As an example, system 30A may store voice mail messages and email messages directed to the user's office, system 30B may store voice mail messages directed to the user's home, and system 30C may store audio messages. The base station 34A acts as a clearinghouse for all messages delivered to the user to any of the systems 30 and pages the paging transceiver 100 whenever a message is received. Thus, when a voice mail message or email message is received at system 30A, the system 30A delivers a page to base station 34A which is then delivered to paging transceiver 100. When a voice message is received at system 30B, the system 30B sends information about the message to system 30A and system 30A then delivers a page to base station 34A for delivering the page to the paging transceiver 100. Similarly, when system 30C has an audio message it notifies system 30A and system 30A acts to have the page delivered to the paging transceiver 100.

An example of the data transmission 201 sent from system 30B or 30C to system 30A is shown in FIG. 11. The data transmission 201 includes system ID information for identifying the system 30 from a potential plurality of systems 30. The system ID information may be an address code or may comprise the telephone number of the system 30 and may be automatically captured by system 30A, such as from Caller ID or from DNIS information. The data message 201 also identifies the paging transceiver(s) 100, such as with an address code or MIN. For many systems 30, the message or information stored will often be for a single user whereby the transceiver ID would be the address code or MIN for that single paging transceiver 100. For other systems 30, however, the system 30 may want to broadcast a single message to a plurality of paging transceivers 100 whereby the transceiver ID may be a code that identifies a predefined group of paging transceivers 100.

The data transmission 201 also includes message information. The message information includes information identifying the message and preferably also includes information specifying the type of the message, the length of the message, and the message priority. The message identification

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may identify the message with a unique code, such as a number, or may specify the address in system 30 for the message. The message type advantageously indicates whether the message is a voice message, email message, audio message, video message, or text message. The message length indicates the size of the message and the message priority indicates the priority level of the message. For instance, the user can designate priorities based upon the telephone number of the caller leaving the message or the priority may be set by the caller. Although the data transmission 201 preferably includes this information, the data transmission 201 may include additional or fewer fields than the example provided in FIG. 11.

The data transmission 201 also includes additional information that may be relayed and presented to the user. For instance, for many systems 30 that receive and store messages on behalf of the user, the additional descriptive information preferably comprises a return address for identifying the caller's telephone number to inform the user as to who left the message. For other systems 30 which may generate their own information, the additional information preferably describes the information available to the user. For instance, for a system 30 that allows users to sample songs, the additional information would indicate the title and the artist of the song and may also specify the cost to retrieve and play the song. Other uses of the additional information will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The page sent to the paging transceiver 100 includes most, if not all, of the data transmission 201. The information transmitted to the paging transceiver 100, with reference to FIG. 7, may be inserted into a short message transmitted to the user at step 98. From the system ID information, the paging transceiver 100 can determine which system 30 it needs to respond to in order to act upon a message. For instance, system 30A may page the paging transceiver 100 and indicate that system 30B has a stored message. If the user selects the retrieve message function, then the paging transceiver 100 can contact system 30B through base station 34B to retrieve the desired message. The paging transceiver 100 as discussed above may instead respond to base station 34A to retrieve the message and base station 34A would communicate with system 30B to retrieve or otherwise act upon the message.

The message information is used by the paging transceiver 100 to inform the user of the message or information stored at the system 30. The message type, length, priority, and additional descriptive material may be displayed or otherwise indicated to the user at the paging transceiver 100. From this information, the user can decide what type of action to take upon the message or information at the system 30.

As described with reference to FIG. 9, a call to the system 30 may be required in order for the paging transceiver 100 to perform a desired function. If a call is required, the paging transceiver 100 relays information in the data transmission 201 to the system 30. If the paging transceiver 100 responds to a system 30 other than the one storing the message or information, the paging transceiver 100 identifies the system 30 storing the message or information and also identifies the message. As discussed above, the message may be identified in a number of ways, such as with a message code or by specifying the location in memory where the message is stored. The call to the system 30 would automatically provide the transceiver identification information to the system 30, although the paging transceiver 100 could provide this information with the other information provided to the system 30.

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Upon receiving a call from the paging transceiver 100, the system 30 reads the transceiver identification and message information to find the information requested by the paging transceiver 100. The information obtained from the paging transceiver 100 at the system 30 and the transfer of the requested information to the paging transceiver occurs at step 135 in FIG. 9.

The system 200 can present substantial cost savings to conventional paging systems. With a conventional paging system, the entire message is transmitted to the location of the paging transceiver 100. For instance, if the user's home base is in Chapel Hill, N.C., and the message originates in Chicago, Ill., then the message is typically sent over the PSTN 35 to the home base. With nationwide paging, the user may have traveled to San Diego, Calif. whereby the home base would then send the entire message from Chapel Hill to San Diego. With system 200, on the other hand, only the data transmission 201 is transmitted from Chicago to Chapel Hill and from Chapel Hill to San Diego. The actual message, in contrast, is sent directly from the storage facility in Chicago to San Diego, thereby reducing charges associated with the transfer between Chicago and Chapel Hill. Moreover, the data transmissions 201 between systems 30 may occur over the Internet. These transmissions, for instance, may be formatted according to the Voice Profile for Internet Mail (VPIM) and the addresses of the transceivers 100 may be determined from an open directory service, such as the Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) or X.500.

The systems 30 and 200 allow a user to easily manage the multitude of messages that are commonly received every day. Conventionally, a user would have to call in to the office voice mail to retrieve voice messages, call home to retrieve voice messages sent to the house, and connect with the computer network at the office to retrieve email messages. Although paging systems have been used to notify a user that a voice mail message or other message has been received, the user would still have to call in to a separate system to actually retrieve the message. The system 200, on the other hand, enables a user to be notified of all messages, regardless of their type and regardless of their location and furthermore allows the user to selectively retrieve, save, erase or perform other functions on the messages. The systems 30 and 200 and paging transceiver 100, moreover, allow the user to exercise control over the remotely stored messages; the user can selectively store, save, retrieve, erase, forward, send or otherwise perform operations on messages stored at a remote location.

The foregoing description of the preferred embodiments of the invention has been presented only for the purpose of illustration and description and is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed. Many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching.

The embodiments were chosen and described in order to explain the principles of the invention and their practical application so as to enable others skilled in the art to utilize the invention and various embodiments and with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.

The invention claimed is:

1. A system, comprising:

a storage unit that stores information for transmission to one or more devices;

means for transmitting to the one or more devices a selective call signal comprising an information identifier

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identifying the information and an acknowledgment request, wherein the information is not included in the selective call signal;

means for receiving a request transmitted from any one of the one or more devices, wherein the request is transmitted via a two-way communication session with the system and the request identifies the information and an action to be performed on the information; and means for performing the action.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the action is to transmit, via the two-way communication session, the information to the transmitting and receiving device that transmitted the request.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the action is to delete the information from the storage unit.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the action is to forward the information to a recipient specified in the request.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the action is to transmit a reply message to the originator of the information, the reply message being included in the request.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the transmitting means transmits the selective call signal to a base station, which then transmits the signal to the one or more transmitting and receiving devices.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the information comprises audio and/or video information.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the audio information comprises music.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the receiving means comprises a receiver and the receiver is configured to receive from at least one of the one or more devices an acknowledgement, wherein the acknowledgment is transmitted from the device in response to the device receiving the selective call signal.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the device is a mobile radiotelephone.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the selective call signal further includes a device identifier, wherein the device identifier is associated only with one of the one or more devices.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the selective call signal further includes a device identifier, wherein the device identifier is associated with a plurality of devices, including said one or more devices.

13. The system of claim 1, wherein the information identifier comprises a code that identifies the information stored in the storage unit.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the code is a unique code that identifies the information stored in the storage unit.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein the code is a number.

16. The system of claim 13, wherein the request comprises said code.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the request is transmitted using the same network that is used to transmit the selective call signal, wherein the network is a wireless network.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a mobile phone.

19. The system of claim 16, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a pager.

20. The system of claim 16, wherein the selective call signal further comprises a mobile identification number (MIN).

21. The system of claim 16, wherein the selective call signal further includes descriptive information.

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22. The system of claim 21, wherein the descriptive information comprises sender information.

23. The system of claim 1, wherein the information identifier specifies an address of the information stored in the storage unit.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein the request includes said information identifier.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the request is transmitted using the same network that is used to transmit the selective call signal, wherein the network is a wireless network.

26. The system of claim 24, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a mobile phone.

27. The system of claim 24, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a pager.

28. The system of claim 24, wherein the selective call signal further comprises a mobile identification number (MIN).

29. The system of claim 24, wherein the selective call signal further includes descriptive information.

30. The system of claim 29, wherein the descriptive information comprises sender information.

31. The system of claim 24, wherein the selective call signal further includes descriptive information.

32. The system of claim 31, wherein the descriptive information comprises sender information.

33. The system of claim 23, wherein the request includes said information identifier.

34. The system of claim 33, wherein the request is transmitted using the same network that is used to transmit the selective call signal, wherein the network is a wireless network.

35. The system of claim 33, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a mobile phone.

36. The system of claim 33, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a pager.

37. The system of claim 33, wherein the selective call signal further comprises a mobile identification number (MIN).

38. The system of claim 1, wherein the means for transmitting comprises a transmitter or transceiver.

39. The system of claim 38, wherein the means for receiving comprises a receiver or the transceiver.

40. The system of claim 39, wherein the means for performing the action comprises a processor.

41. In a communications network comprising a transmitting and receiving device for transmitting data to and receiving data from a system remote from the transmitting and receiving device, a method performed by the system, comprising the steps of:

storing a message intended for the transmitting and receiving device;

transmitting to the transmitting and receiving device a selective call signal comprising an acknowledgment request and a message identifier identifying the message, wherein the message is not included in the selective call signal;

receiving a request transmitted from the transmitting and receiving device via a two-way communication session with the system, wherein the request identifies the message and an action to be performed on the message; and

performing the action after receiving the request.

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42. The method of claim 41, wherein the action is to transmit, via the two-way communication session, the message to the transmitting and receiving device that transmitted the request.

43. The method of claim 41, wherein the action is to delete the message from the storage unit.

44. The method of claim 41, wherein the action is to forward the message to a recipient specified in the request.

45. The method of claim 41, wherein the action is to transmit a reply message to the originator of the message, the reply message being included in the request.

46. The method of claim 41, wherein the transmitting means transmits the selective call signal to a base station, which then transmits the signal to the one or more transmitting and receiving devices.

47. The method of claim 41, wherein the information comprises audio and/or video information.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein the audio information comprises music.

49. The method of claim 41, further comprising receiving from the one or more devices an acknowledgement, wherein the acknowledgment is transmitted from the device in response to the device receiving the selective call signal.

50. The method of claim 41, wherein the device is a mobile radiotelephone.

51. The method of claim 41, wherein the selective call signal further includes a device identifier, wherein the device identifier is associated only with one of the one or more devices.

52. The method of claim 41, wherein the message further includes a device identifier, wherein the device identifier is associated with a plurality of devices, including said one or more devices.

53. The method of claim 41, wherein the message identifier comprises a code that identifies the information stored in the storage unit.

54. The method of claim 53, wherein the code is a unique code.

55. The method of claim 54, wherein the code is a number.

56. The method of claim 53, wherein the request comprises said code.

57. The method of claim 56, wherein the request is transmitted using the same network that is used to transmit the selective call signal, wherein the network is a wireless network.

58. The method of claim 56, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a mobile phone.

59. The method of claim 56, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a pager.

60. The method of claim 56, wherein the selective call signal further comprises a mobile identification number (MIN).

61. The method of claim 56, wherein the selective call signal further includes descriptive information.

62. The method of claim 61, wherein the descriptive information comprises sender information.

63. The method of claim 41, wherein the information identifier specifies an address of the information stored in the storage unit.

64. The method of claim 63, wherein the request includes said information identifier.

65. The method of claim 64, wherein the request is transmitted using the same network that is used to transmit the selective call signal, wherein the network is a wireless network.

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66. The method of claim 64, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a mobile phone.

67. The method of claim 64, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a pager.

68. The method of claim 64, wherein the selective call signal further comprises a mobile identification number (MIN).

69. The method of claim 64, wherein the selective call signal further includes descriptive information.

70. The method of claim 69, wherein the descriptive information comprises sender information.

71. A system, comprising:

a storage unit that stores information for transmission to one or more devices;

a transmitter that transmits to the one or more devices a selective call signal comprising an information identifier identifying the information and an acknowledgment request, wherein the information is not included in the selective call signal;

a receiver that receives a request transmitted from any one of the one or more devices, wherein the request is transmitted via a two-way communication session with the system and the request identifies the information and an action to be performed on the information; and a processor that performs the action.

72. The system of claim 71, wherein the action is to transmit, via the two-way communication session, the information to the transmitting and receiving device that transmitted the request.

73. The system of claim 71, wherein the action is to delete the information from the storage unit.

74. The system of claim 71, wherein the action is to forward the information to a recipient specified in the request.

75. The system of claim 71, wherein the action is to transmit a reply message to the originator of the information, the reply message being included in the request.

76. The system of claim 71, wherein the transmitter transmits the selective call signal to a base station, which then transmits the signal to the one or more transmitting and receiving devices.

77. The system of claim 71, wherein the information comprises audio and/or video information.

78. The system of claim 77, wherein the audio information comprises music.

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79. The system of claim 71, wherein the receiver receives from at least one of the one or more devices an acknowledgement, wherein the acknowledgment is transmitted from the device in response to the device receiving the selective call signal.

80. The system of claim 71, wherein the device is a mobile radiotelephone.

81. The system of claim 71, wherein the device comprises a transceiver.

82. The system of claim 71, wherein the selective call signal further includes a device identifier, wherein the device identifier is associated with only one of the one or more devices.

83. The system of claim 71, wherein the selective call signal further includes a device identifier, wherein the device identifier is associated with a plurality of devices, including each of said one or more devices.

84. The system of claim 71, wherein the information identifier comprises a code that identifies the information stored in the storage unit.

85. The system of claim 84, wherein the code is a unique code.

86. The system of claim 84, wherein the code is a number.

87. The system of claim 84, wherein the request comprises said code.

88. The system of claim 87, wherein the request is transmitted using the same network that is used to transmit the selective call signal, wherein the network is a wireless network.

89. The system of claim 87, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a mobile phone.

90. The system of claim 87, wherein the selective call signal further comprises an address associated with a pager.

91. The system of claim 87, wherein the selective call signal further comprises a mobile identification number (MIN).

92. The system of claim 87, wherein the selective call signal further includes descriptive information.

93. The system of claim 92, wherein the descriptive information comprises sender information.

94. The system of claim 71, wherein the information identifier specifies an address of the information stored in the storage unit.

* * * * *

Exhibit C



US007280838B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Helferich

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(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Oct. 9, 2007**

(54) **PAGING TRANSCEIVERS AND METHODS
FOR SELECTIVELY RETRIEVING
MESSAGES**

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(*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
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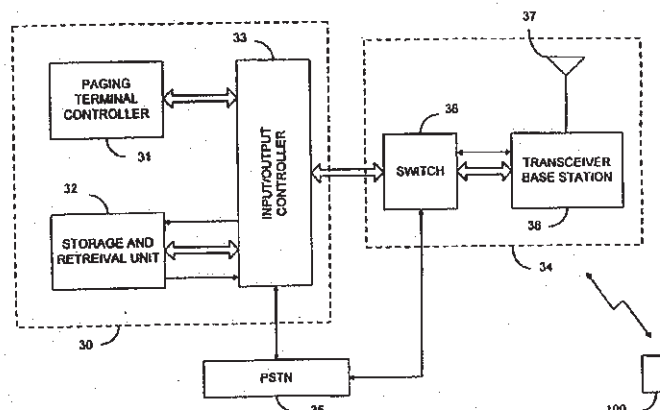
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A paging transceiver and method for selectively paging
provides a page to a paging transceiver but does not auto-
matically provide an associated message. The paging trans-
ceiver receives the page and alerts the user that a message is
waiting and preferably provides a short description of the
message. The user can then download or otherwise act on the
message at a time and at a place convenient to the user. The
user can therefore place the paging transceiver in a location
where it can easily receive and reply to the message. The
paging system conserves air time and the paging transceiver
conserves memory by not automatically receiving the asso-
ciated messages. The user can determine the time at which
the paging transceiver receives transmissions, such as during
off-peak hours. The messages stored by the systems and
delivered to the paging transceiver may be of different types,
such as voice, text, audio, or even video. In addition to
messages, the paging system can store other information for
the user, such as songs or video clips that the user can sample
or updates on weather or stock rates.

96 Claims, 12 Drawing Sheets



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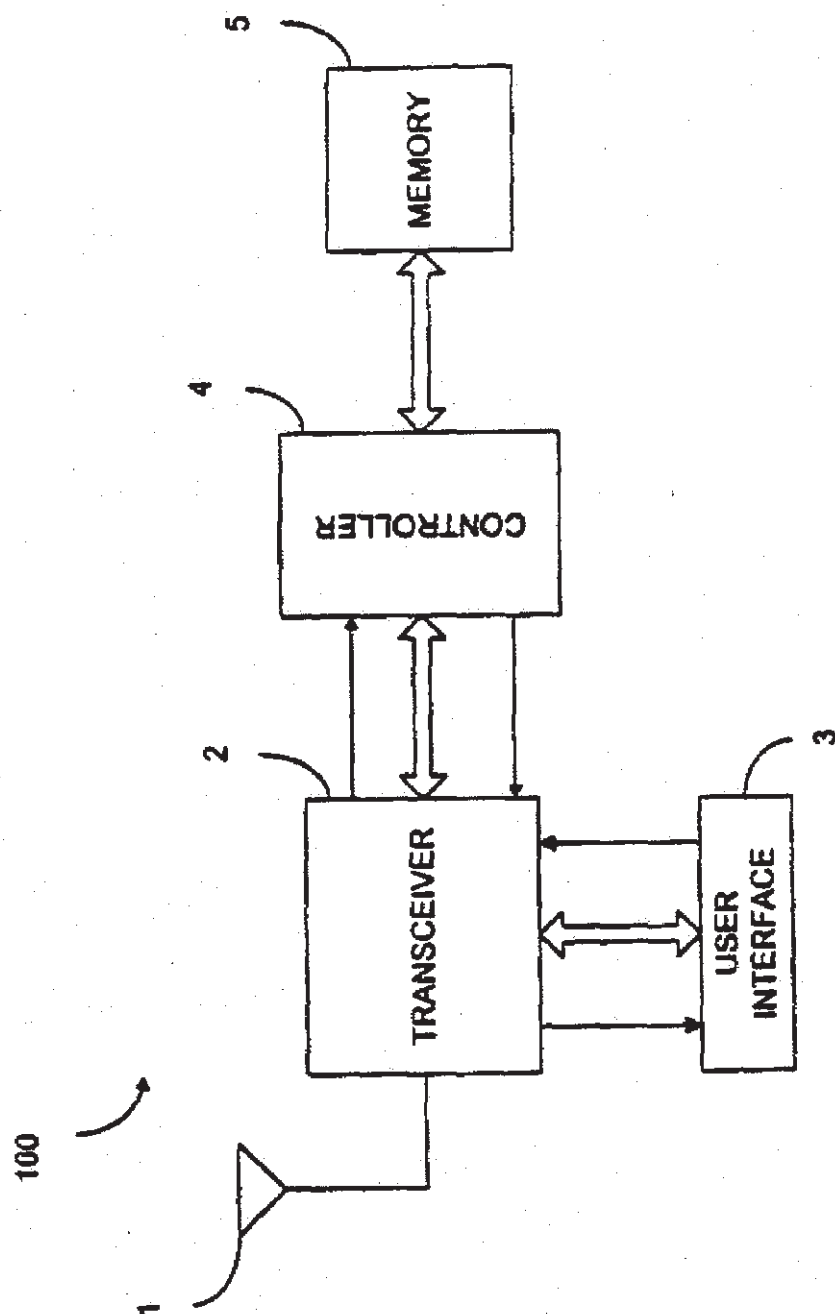


FIG. 1

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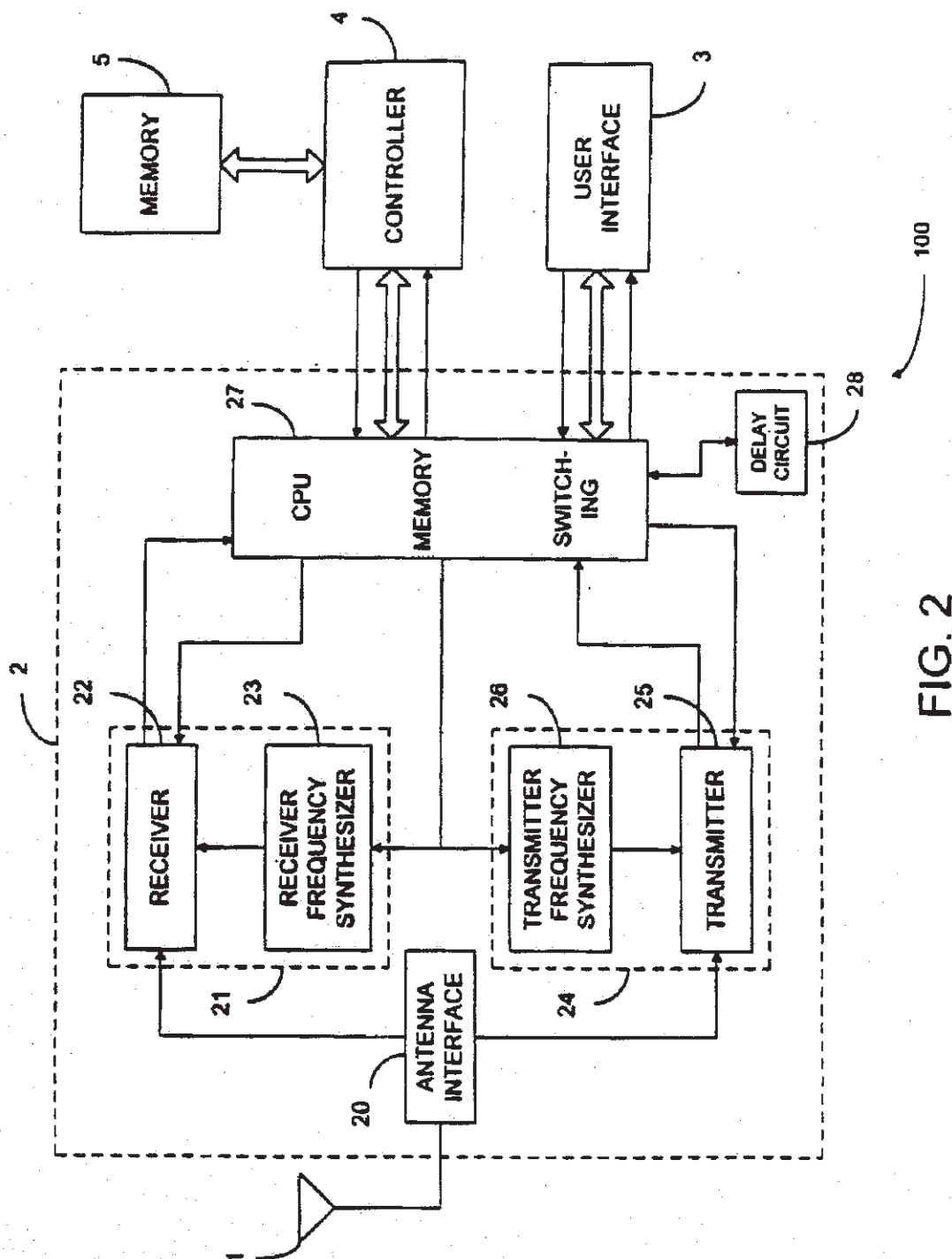


FIG. 2

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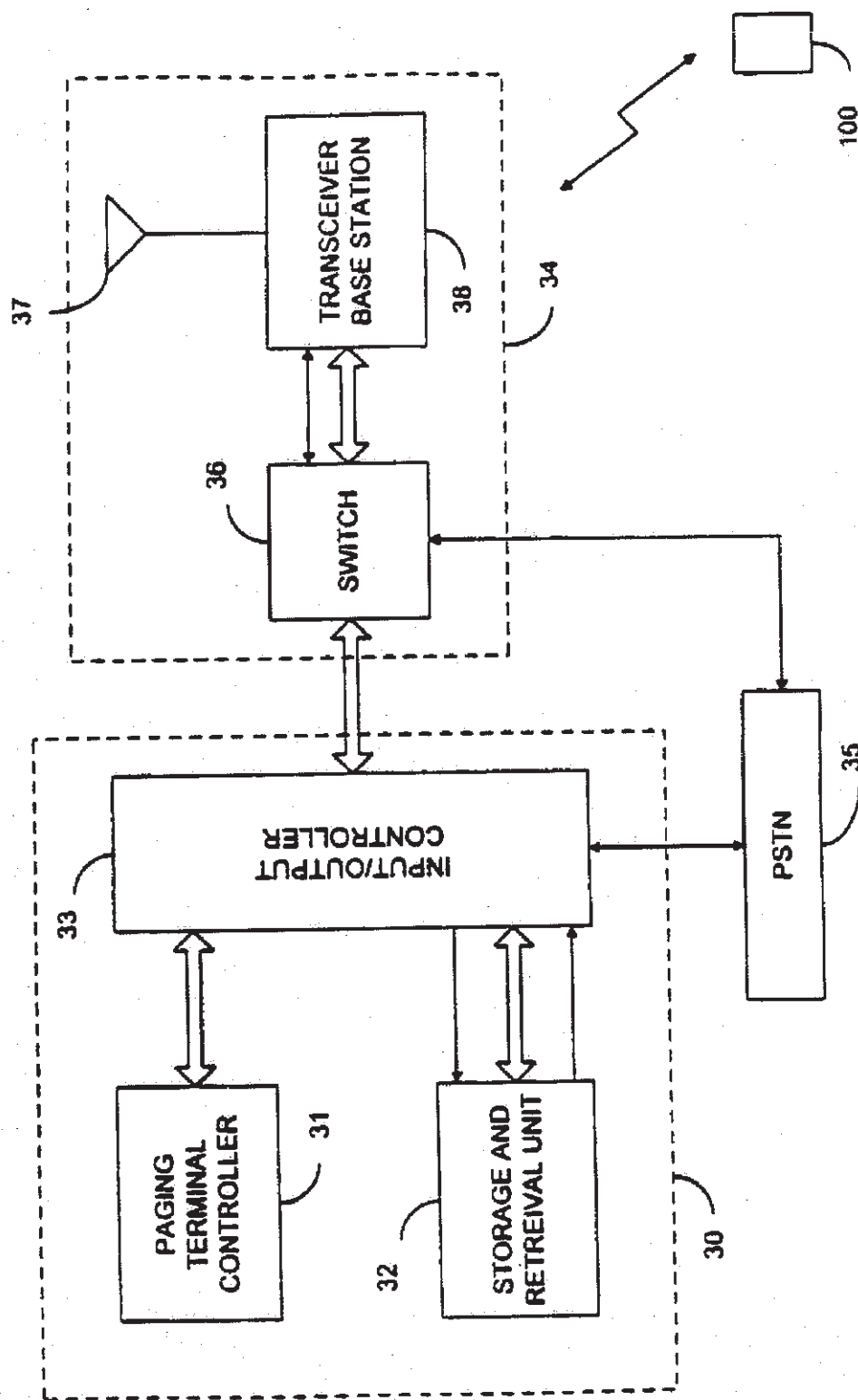


FIG. 3

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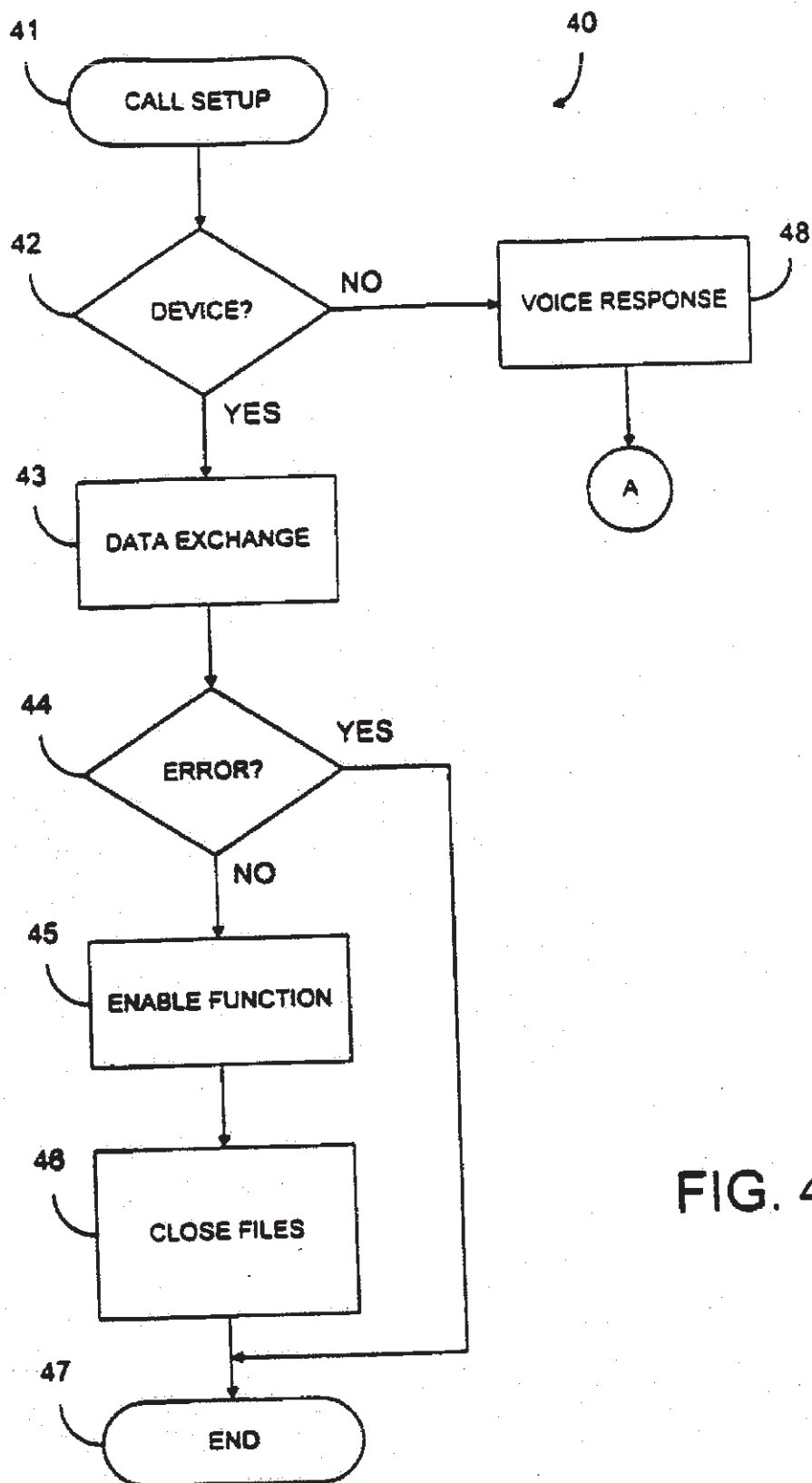


FIG. 4A

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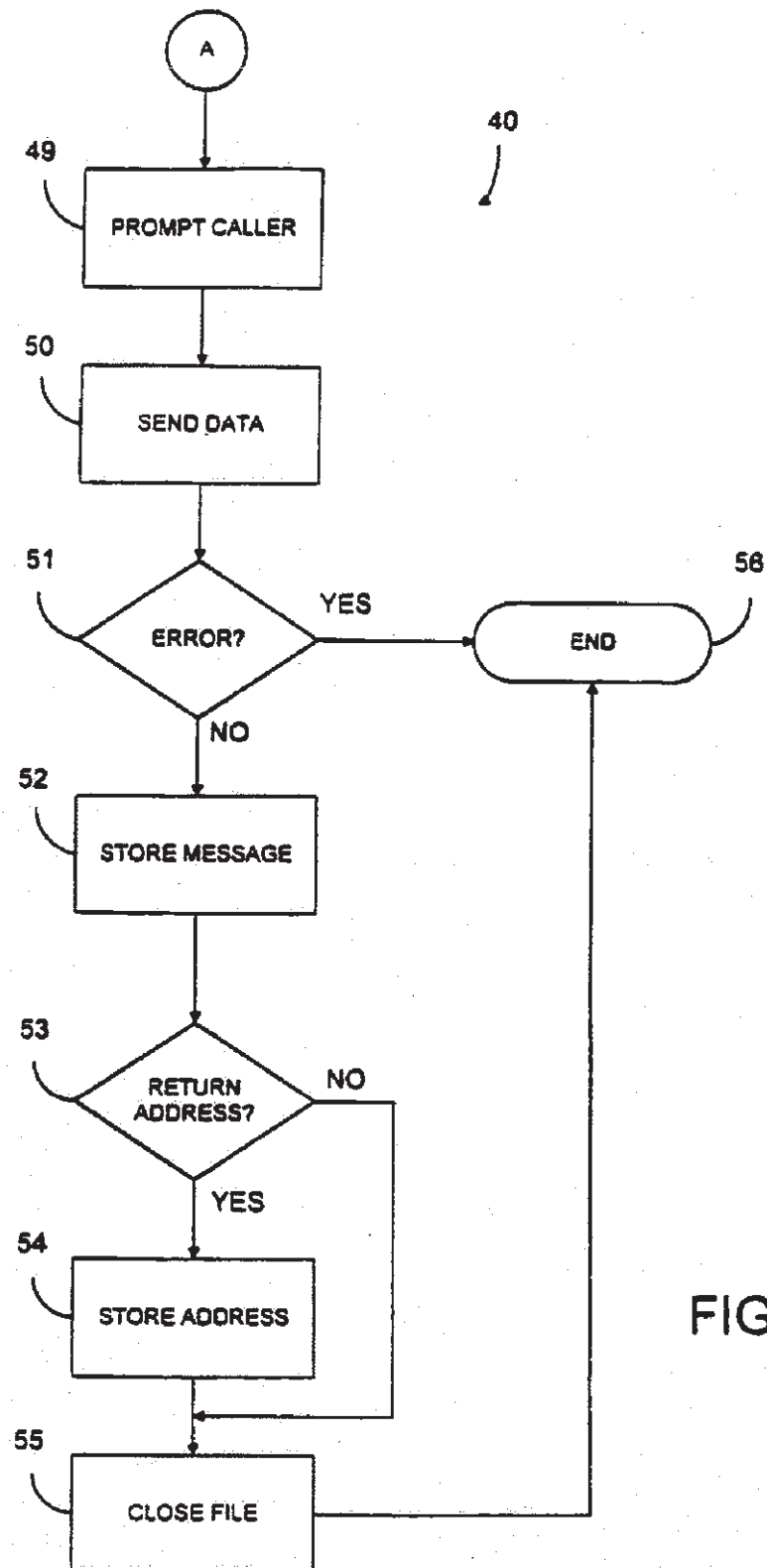


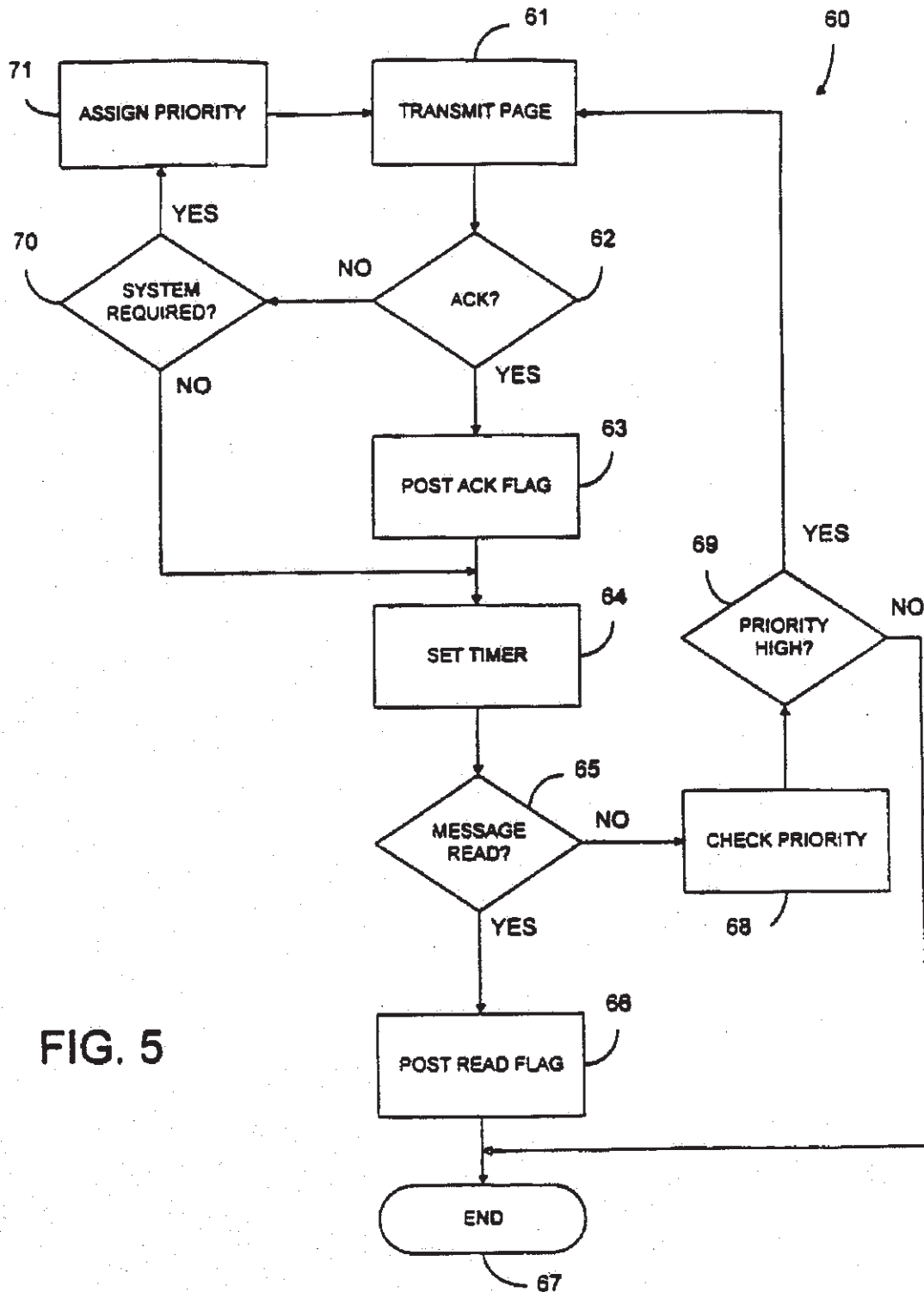
FIG. 4B

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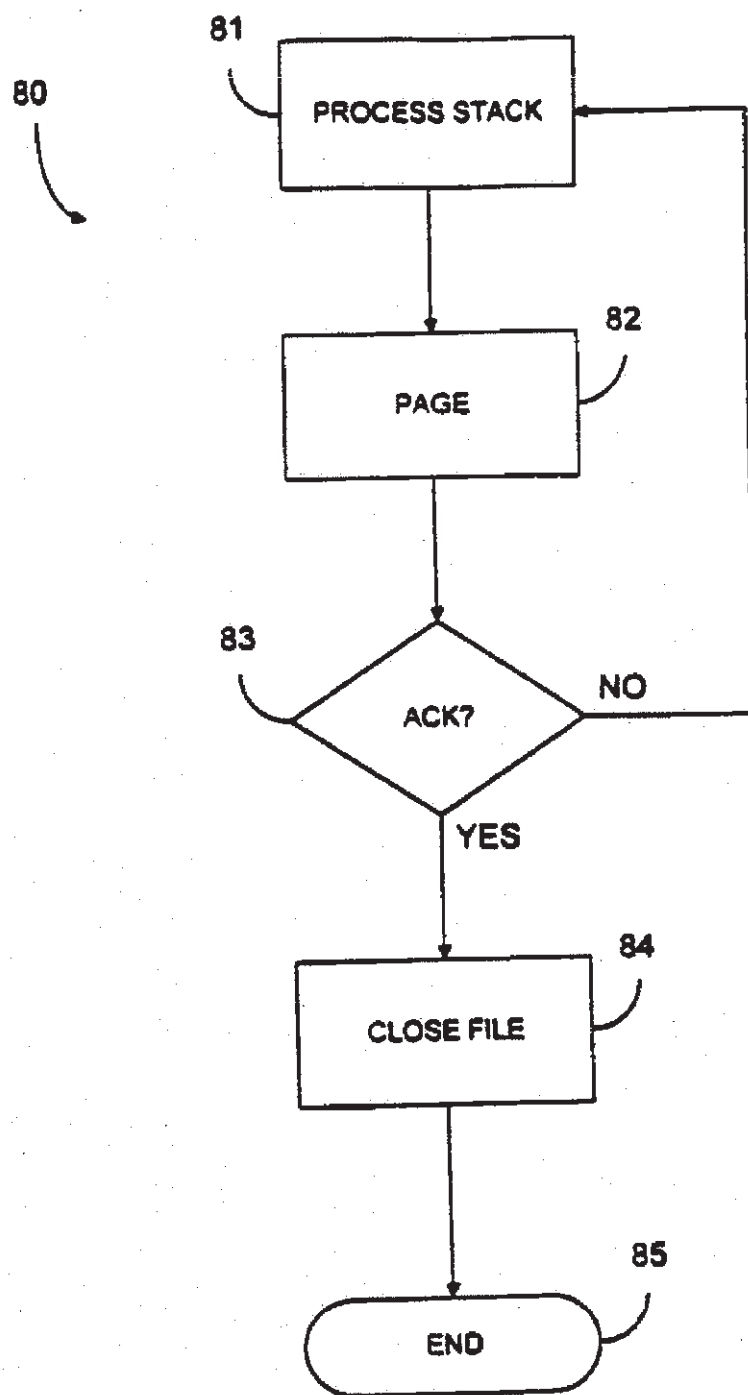


FIG. 6

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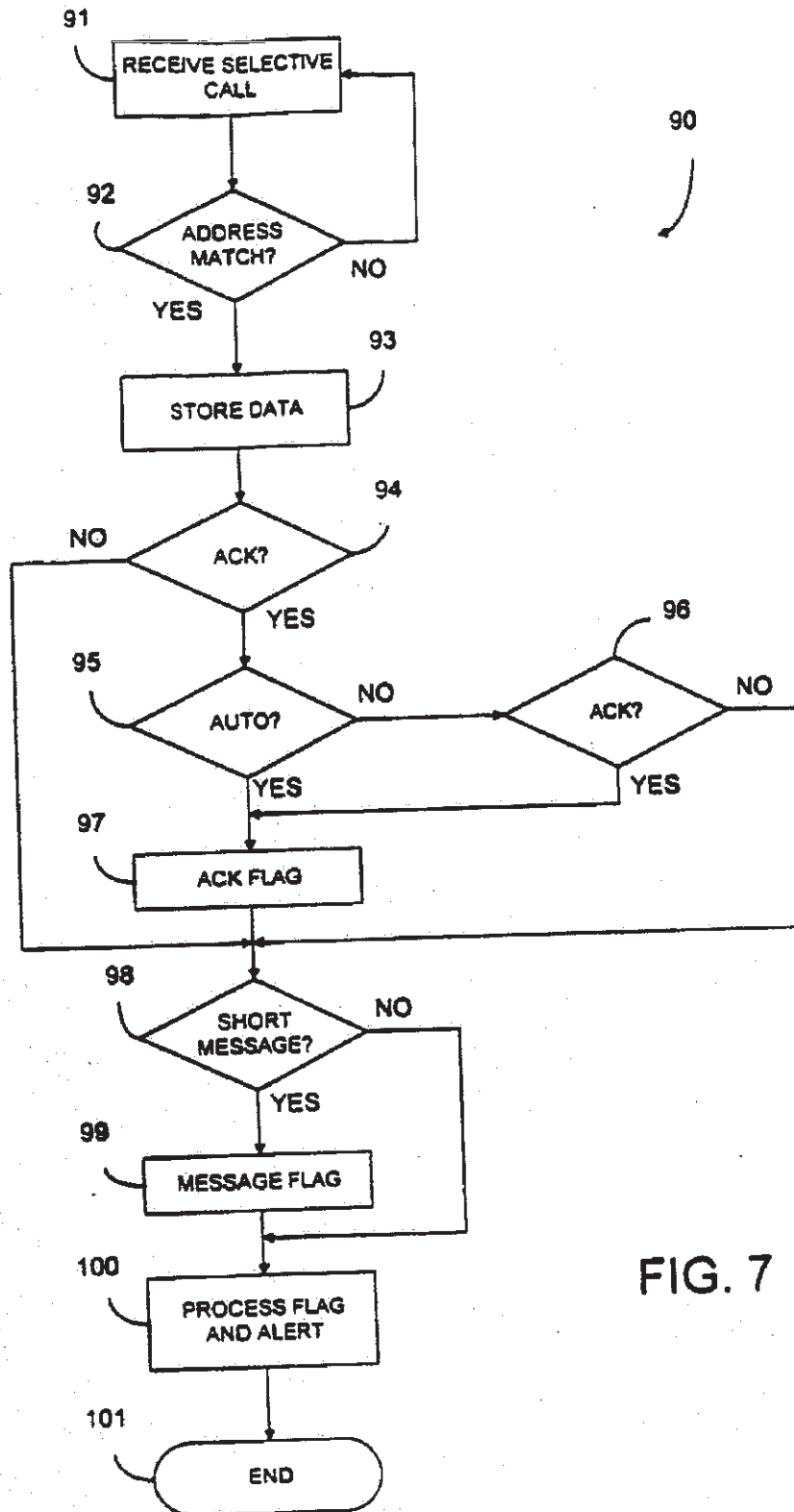


FIG. 7

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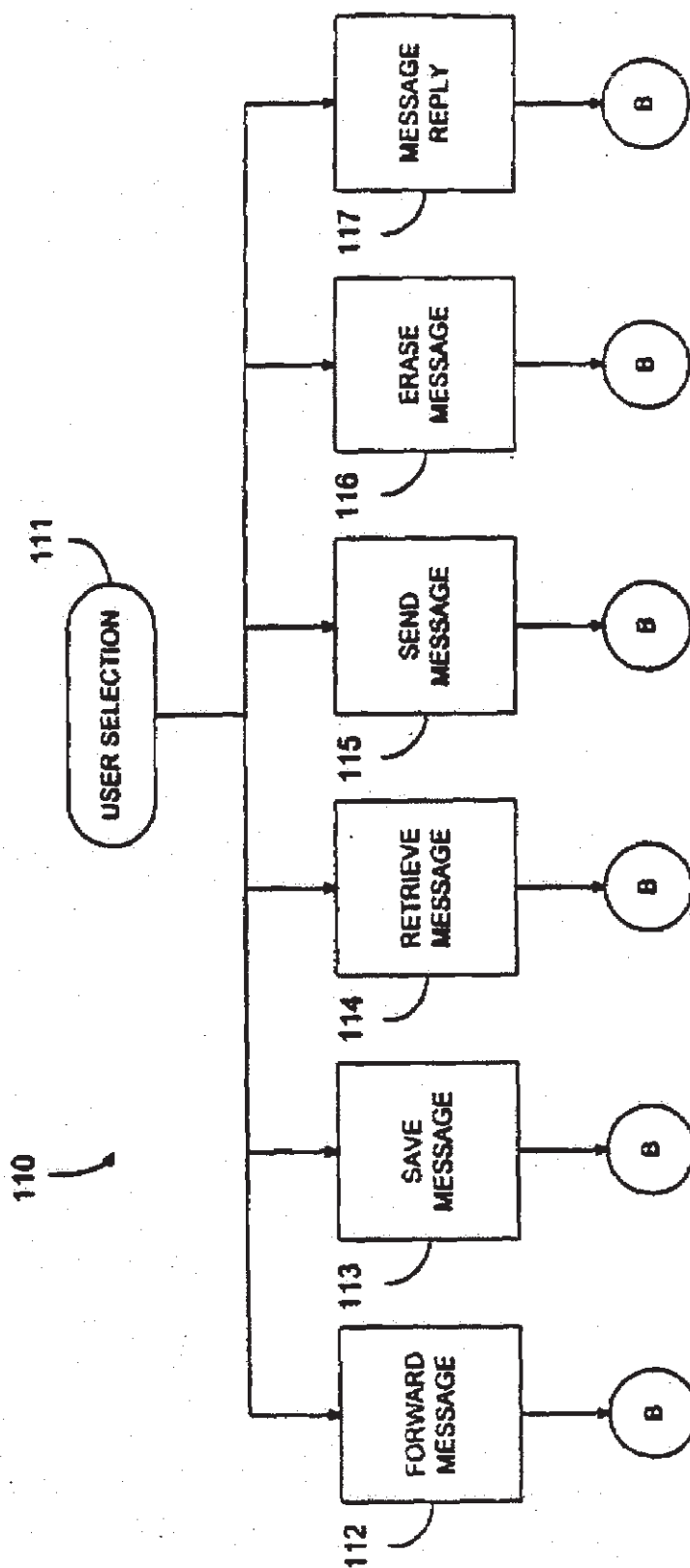


FIG. 8

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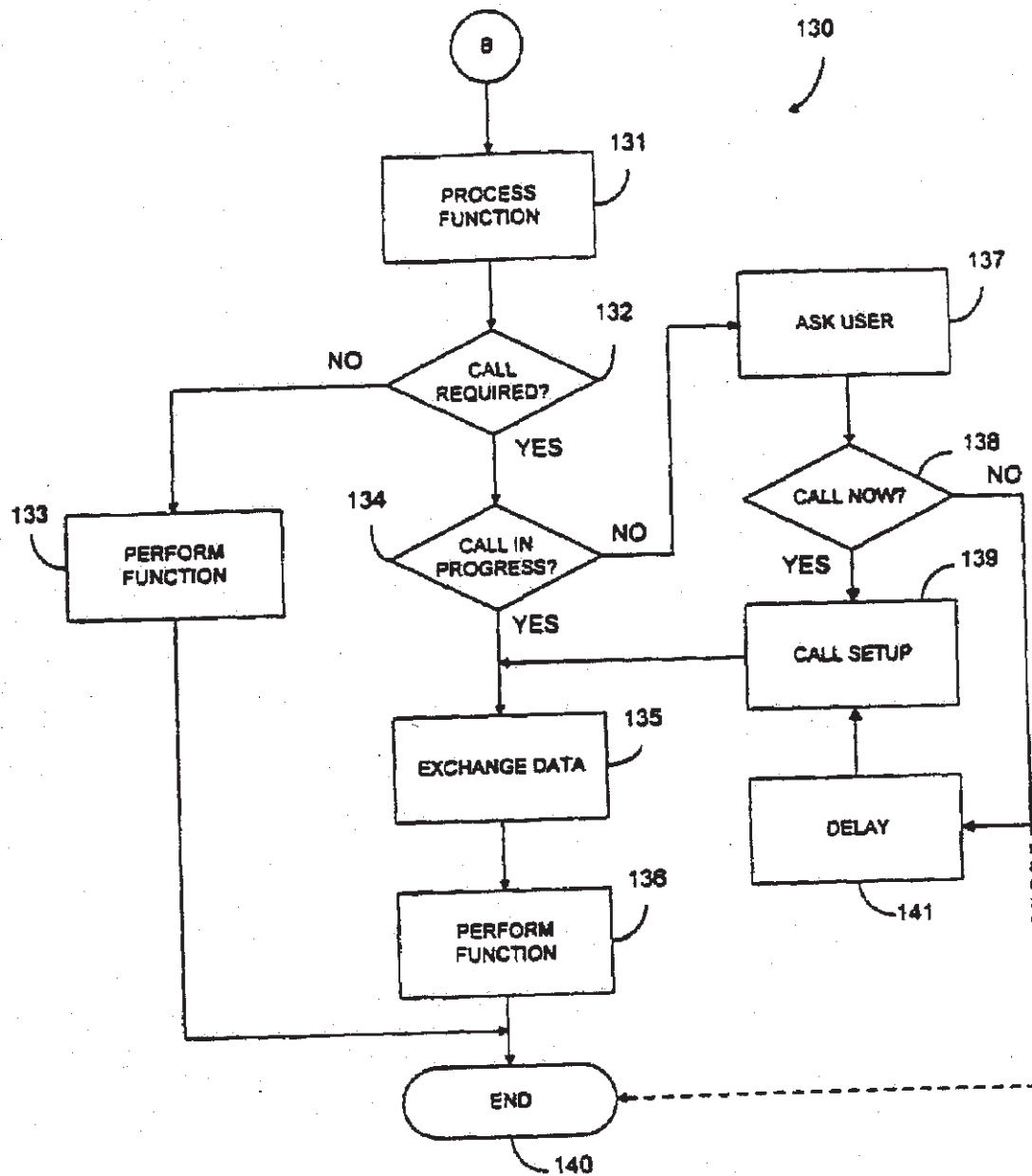


FIG. 9

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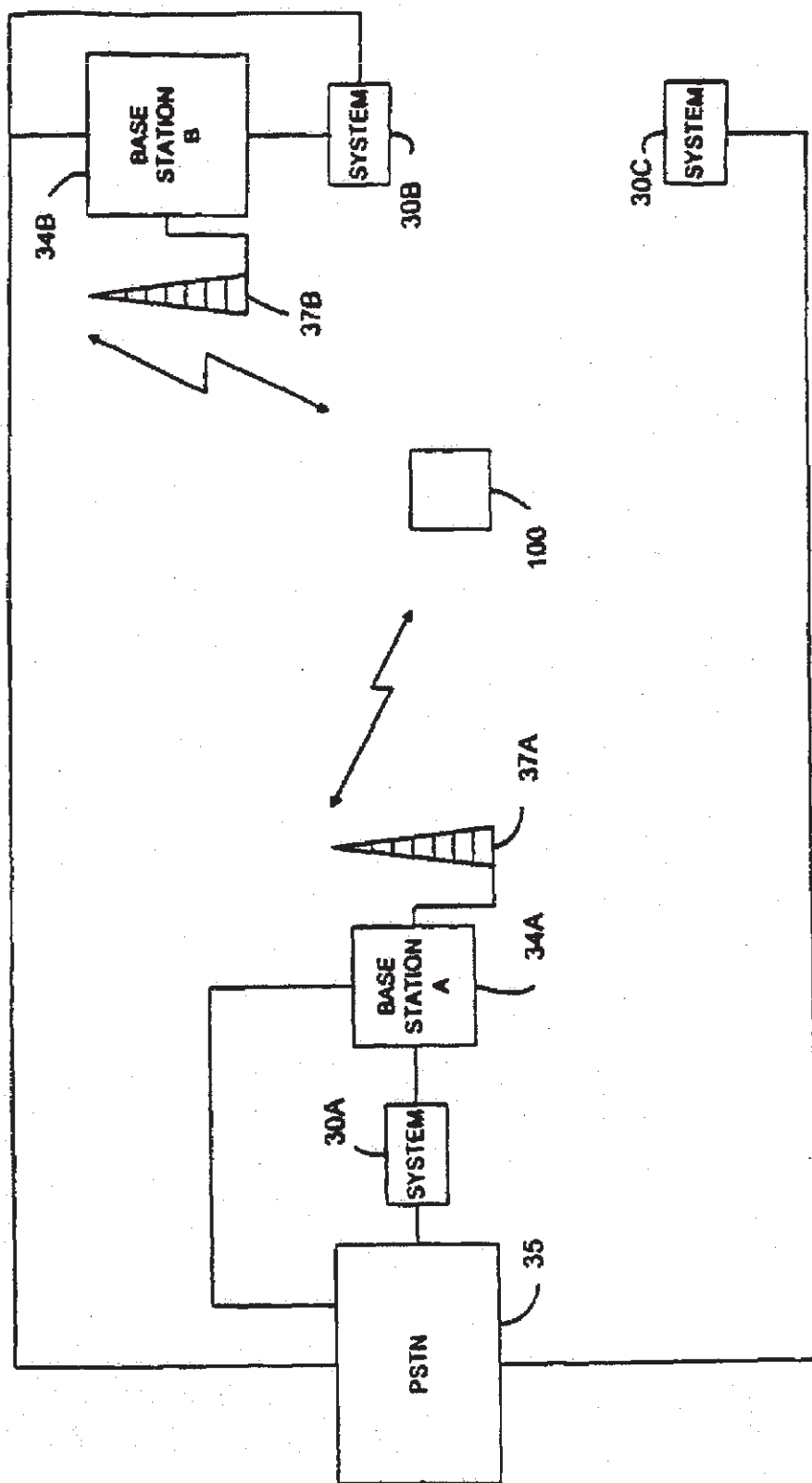


FIG. 10

201
↘

SYSTEM ID	TRANSCIVER(S) ID	MESSAGE ID	MESSAGE TYPE	MESSAGE LENGTH	MESSAGE PRIORITY	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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FIG. 11

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PAGING TRANSCIVERS AND METHODS FOR SELECTIVELY RETRIEVING MESSAGES

This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/688,321, filed on Oct. 13, 2000 now U.S. Pat. No. 7,003,304, which is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/934,143, filed on Sep. 19, 1997 (Now U.S. Pat. No. 6,233,430). The contents of the above referenced applications are incorporated herein by this reference.

RELATED APPLICATIONS

Reference is made to the following related issued patents: U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,259,892; 6,233,430; 6,087,956; 6,253,061; 6,462,646; 6,696,921 and 6,459,360.

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to paging transceivers and methods for selectively acting on messages and, more particularly, to paging transceivers and methods for selectively retrieving messages.

2. Background of the Invention

In general, a paging receiver can be classified into one of four categories: an alert or tone only paging receiver, a numeric paging receiving, an alphanumeric paging receiver, or a voice paging receiver. One common characteristic of all of these paging receivers is that they monitor the air waves and notify the user when their particular address has been detected. For the alert or tone only paging receiver, the paging receiver would generate a tone or beep when its address is detected. The other paging receivers, upon detecting their address, would additionally store a message associated with the address signal and display or play it to the user. The message for a numeric paging receiver would be a set of numbers, typically the calling person's telephone number, and the message for an alphanumeric paging receiver would be a set of numbers and/or letters. The user of an alphanumeric paging receiver could therefore receive a message in the form of a telephone number with some descriptive text. For the voice paging receiver, the message that is stored is a voice message that the user can later play to hear the message.

A paging receiver is typically a rather small electronic device and, accordingly, has a limited amount of memory for storing messages that have been received from a base station in a paging system. Because of the relatively small size of the memory, the paging receiver can store only a limited number of messages. A user can delete messages from memory but will oftentimes desire to save a message, such as temporarily until the user makes a note of the message or until he or she is able to respond to the page. The messages that are saved in memory, however, reduce the space in memory that is available to receive new messages. This demand on space in memory is increasing as the size of the messages continue to grow and as users receive a greater number of messages. Although more memory can be added to accommodate more messages, the added cost and space needed for extra memory runs counter to the desires to keep the paging receiver small and inexpensive. A need therefore exists for a paging receiver which can display and/or play messages while efficiently using memory.

In addition to the demand on paging receiver memory, paging systems will be challenged as greater numbers of pages are being transmitted and as the size of the transmitted messages increases. Initially, when paging systems were only concerned with transmitting address signals of the paging receivers, the size of each transmission by the paging

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systems was relatively small. Paging receivers and paging systems, however, have undergone tremendous advances with paging systems now transmitting messages which can be hundreds of kilobytes or greater in size in addition to the address signals. Additionally, many paging receivers are actually paging transceivers which transmit acknowledgment signals back through the paging system. The capacity of the paging systems are therefore being challenged not only by messages of increasing sizes but also by reply signals transmitted from the paging transceivers to the paging system. The future of paging systems is therefore tied to the ability of the paging systems to control the number and size of the data transmissions and to provide additional features without sacrificing the quality of service to the user.

As discussed above, many paging transceivers are able to issue a reply or acknowledgment back to the base station in response to a received message. If the base station does not receive this reply or acknowledgment, then the base station assumes that the message has not been received and will repeatedly transmit the message until the reply or acknowledgment is received. Due to the high power levels at which the base station transmits its paging signals, the signals are usually easily received by all paging transceivers located within the coverage area of the base station antenna. The paging transceivers, on the other hand, must operate at lower power levels and often cannot transmit signals at sufficiently high levels to reach the base station. For example, when a paging transceiver is located in a basement of a building, in a subway, or in an airplane, the paging transceiver may be unable to issue a reply that can reach the base station. As a result, the base station may continue to transmit a page to a paging transceiver and the paging transceiver will continue to receive the message but the base station cannot detect the reply being issued by the paging transceiver. This unnecessary transmission of duplicate messages and the ineffectual reply signals transmitted by the paging transceivers consume valuable resources of the paging system and of the paging transceiver.

For safety reasons, a user may at times have to turn off his or her paging transceiver. For instance, when the user is on an airplane, the transmissions from the paging transceiver can interfere with the instrumentation or communication within the cockpit of the plane. The paging transceiver therefore should not be operating within the plane or around other electronic equipment that are sensitive to interference from the signals transmitted by the paging transceiver. As another example, if the user is in an environment that contains electronic detonators for explosive materials, the signals transmitted by the paging transceiver could possibly trigger an explosion. The user therefore must turn his or her paging transceiver off to ensure that it does not transmit any reply or acknowledgment signals in response to a received page. Although it may be dangerous for the pager transceiver to issue a reply signal in these situations, the signals transmitted by the base station may at times be safely received by the paging transceiver. Since the paging transceiver automatically issues a reply in response to a received message, the paging transceiver must nonetheless be turned off so as to not pose a risk to the user. During these times that the paging transceiver must be turned off, the user unfortunately is unable to receive any page or message. A need therefore exists for a paging transceiver that can notify a user of a message without automatically generating a reply message or acknowledgment to the base station.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention solves the problems described above with methods and systems for selective paging. A paging system notifies a paging transceiver that a message has been received but does not initially transmit the associated message. The user, upon being notified of the message, can then download the entire message at a time convenient to the user, which allows the user to download messages at less-expensive off-peak hours and allows the user to place the paging transceiver at a location where it can easily receive the message and reply to the message. Since the messages are not initially transmitted to the paging transceiver, the paging transceiver can receive and store a greater number of pages with minimal increase in the size of memory. Further, because entire messages are not automatically transmitted and since the user can position the paging transceiver to issue a sufficiently strong reply, traffic in the paging system can be controlled and actually reduced.

The system may transmit some identifying information about the page to the user without sending the entire message. For instance, the base station may identify the type of message, such as email, voice, or text, and also indicate the caller or other descriptive material about the message. The user can then determine the priority of the message and whether he or she wants to retrieve the message, play the message, erase the message, store the message, forward, reply, or otherwise act on the message. The user is also given control over the messages stored remotely from the paging transceiver and can erase or store these messages from the paging transceiver. The paging transceiver may have a timer for allowing the user to program the paging transceiver to perform a desired function on a message at a particular time.

The information initially sent to the user may also indicate the location of the stored message. For instance, the system paging a particular paging transceiver to notify it that a page has been received need not be the system actually storing the content of the message. Instead, a plurality of systems may store the contents of messages with one or more of the systems paging the paging transceiver. The paging transceiver would be provided sufficient information on the system storing the message so that it can communicate with this system. The system paging the paging transceiver can therefore act as a clearinghouse for other messaging systems by notifying a user of all messages received regardless of their source or type.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide paging transceivers and methods for paging that conserve memory in paging transceivers.

It is another object of the present invention to provide pager transceiver and methods for paging that conserve valuable air time.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for paging that provide users with remote control over their messages.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for paging that allow users to select when and how action should be taken on their messages.

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods for notifying users of received messages.

It is also an object of the present invention to provide paging transceivers and methods for providing control to users over messages stored at remote locations.

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It is still another object of the present invention to provide pager transceivers and methods that notify users of messages received from multiple sources.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and form a part of the specification, illustrate preferred embodiments of the present invention and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the invention. In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a paging transceiver according to a preferred embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a more detailed block diagram of the transceiver in the paging transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a communication system according to a preferred embodiment of the invention;

FIGS. 4A and 4B are flow charts depicting an exemplary set-up routine for establishing communications between the system of FIG. 3 and the transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a flow chart depicting a paging process;

FIG. 6 is a flow chart depicting a process of notifying a paging transceiver of an unread message;

FIG. 7 is a flow chart depicting a process of receiving a page at the paging transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 8 is a flow chart depicting a process of selecting a function at the paging transceiver of FIG. 1;

FIG. 9 is a generic flow chart depicting a selective process performed at the paging transceiver of FIG. 1 for executing a desired function;

FIG. 10 is a block diagram of a paging system having multiple systems for storing messages; and

FIG. 11 is a diagram of a data transmission for the system in FIG. 10.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reference will now be made in detail to preferred embodiments of the invention, non-limiting examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. With reference to FIG. 1, a paging transceiver 100 according to a preferred embodiment of the invention comprises an antenna 1, a transceiver 2, a user interface 3, a controller 4, and a memory 5. The single antenna 1 is preferably used for both receiving and transmitting signals, although the paging transceiver 100 may comprise a separate antenna for transmitting signals and a separate antenna for receiving signals.

The transceiver 2 is connected to the antenna 1 and is for transmitting signals from the paging transceiver 100 and for receiving signals directed to the paging transceiver 100. The signals that may be transmitted to, or received from, the paging transceiver 100 include, but are not limited to, such signals as selective call signals, command data signals, signals corresponding to a message, and information data signals. The transceiver 2 may comprise a transceiver found in two way pagers or mobile radios and preferably comprises a transceiver commonly used in a portable mobile radiotelephone.

The transceiver 2 is connected to the user interface 3, which contains all necessary input and output devices. The user interface 3 includes a microphone, speaker, alert transducer, LED or LCD display, keypad, and necessary switches. The user interface 3 may also contain other types of input/output devices depending on the messaging application, such as a video display, camera, scanner, a printer, or a voice recognition device. The user interface 3 is not limited to these examples of user input/output devices but may

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comprise any input or output device which allows or assists communication between the user and the paging transceiver 100.

The transceiver 2 is connected to, and communicates with, the controller 4, which preferably comprises a digital signal processor (DSP) 4. The memory 5 is connected to the DSP 4 and is for storing messages or other types of information. The memory 5 may comprise static RAM, Dynamic RAM, Flash RAM, or any type of memory suitable for storing messages and allowing the retrieval of the messages. The amount of the memory 5 is preferably at least 4 MB for voice or text applications, although it may consist of a greater or lesser amount depending upon the specific message type application.

The transceiver 2, as shown in more detail in FIG. 2, includes an antenna interface 20 connected to the antenna 1. The antenna interface 20 directs signals received from antenna 1 to a receiver section 21 of the paging transceiver 100 and directs signals transmitted from a transmit section 24 to the antenna 1. The antenna interface 20 is preferably a duplexer, however an antenna switch or other device may be utilized to provide signal isolation between the receiver and transmitter sections 21 and 24. Alternatively, if paging transceiver 100 includes two antennas 1 with one for transmitting signals and the other for receiving signals, the transceiver 2 would not require any type of antenna interface 20.

The receive section 21 includes a receiver 22 and a receiver frequency synthesizer 23. The receiver 22 is connected to the antenna 1 through antenna interface 20 and receives the signals directed to the paging transceiver 100. The receiver frequency synthesizer 23, based on an input from a processor 27, selects the frequency at which the receiver 22 receives signals. The received signals are passed from the receiver 22 to the processor 27.

The transmit section 24 includes a transmitter 25 for receiving signals from the processor 27. The transmit section 24 also includes a transmitter frequency synthesizer 26 connected to the transmitter 25 which, based upon an input from the processor 27, selects the transmit frequency for the transmitter 25. The signals output by the transmitter 25 are supplied to the antenna interface 20 and then to the antenna 1.

The processor 27 comprises a central processing unit (CPU) having internal memory and switching capabilities. The CPU 27, for instance, comprises all necessary RAM and ROM memory, signal and data switching circuitry, signal processing circuitry, I-O Ports, and all standard program instructions and stored options commonly utilized in portable cellular telephones. The standard cellular telephone program instructions and CPU 27 may be obtained from a variety of suppliers. For instance, the instructions may be obtained from Wireless Link Inc. of Sunnyvale, Calif. and the CPU 27 from GEC Plessey Semiconductor, Inc. of Scotts Valley, Calif.

The DSP 4 includes necessary I-O and program memory and are commonly utilized in cellular telephones. Any suitable DSP may be used in the paging transceiver 100. Alternatively, the controller 4 may comprise another type of electronic device, such as a codec or digital-to-analog/analog-to-digital conversion circuit or other type of modulator-demodulator including memory interface circuitry coupled to message memory 5 for reading and writing of messages.

The transceiver 2 also preferably includes a delay circuit 28. The delay circuit 28 may comprise a timer which informs the processor 27 of when a period of time has expired. The

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timer, for instance, may expire at a certain time of day, week, or month, or may expire a fixed period of time after a triggering event, such as one hour after the event. The time at which the timer 28 expires is preferably programmable through the user interface 3 and through processor 27.

Additionally, the timer 28 preferably comprises a plurality of timers for notifying the processor 27 of when a plurality of different time periods have expired. Rather than a timer, the delay circuit 28 may alternatively operate to delay the occurrence of an event until a certain condition is satisfied. This condition, for instance, may be the strength of received signals or the receipt of a specified signal. The purpose of the timer 28 will become apparent from the description below.

With reference to FIG. 3, a system 30 according to a preferred embodiment of the invention is interconnected to a base station 34, both of which are connected to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) or to other telephone company equipment 35. The system 30 comprises a paging terminal controller 31 which may comprise a controller circuit and associated memory having a database of subscriber listings and corresponding selective call address fields. The paging terminal controller 31 communicates with storage and retrieval unit 32 and correlates messages with subscriber listings. The storage and retrieval unit 32 may comprise a CPU or control circuit, message information and program memory, memory interface circuitry and a DSP with appropriate operational code for storage and retrieval of the desired messages. The input/output controller 33 contains all necessary input and output circuitry such as encoders and decoders, modems and required routing and control circuitry for communicating with the paging terminal controller 31, the storage and retrieval unit 32, the PSTN 35, and the base station 34.

A call setup routine 40 for establishing communication between the system 30 and base station 34 will now be described with reference to FIGS. 4A and 4B. At step 41, a connection, such as a telephone connection, is routed through the PSTN 35 or in the case of paging transceiver 100 the switch 36, to the input/output controller 33. The input/output controller 33 determines at step 42 whether the connection is with an automated signaling device or with a person. If the connection is with a person, then at step 48 the storage and retrieval unit 32 is activated to produce one or more voice responses during the call in order to guide the person throughout the process.

If, at step 42, the input/output controller 33 determines that the call is from a device, such as a paging transceiver 100 or computer terminal, data is exchanged between the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 at step 43. The type of data that may be exchanged includes, but is not limited to, the following types of data: identification data, command data, and information data. The data supplied from the PSTN 35 may also be exchanged at step 43 with this data including data for identifying the caller and subscriber, such as, for example, Caller ID and DNIS (Dialed Number Identification Service). Additionally, the data may be extracted from the base station 34. For example, the location of the paging transceiver 100 may be determined from a home location registry (HLR) and the HLR data may be utilized by the system 30 in order to determine the location of the paging transceiver 100, as opposed to having the paging transceiver 100 supply the location information to system 30.

After data is exchanged at step 43, the system 30 determines at step 44 whether an error occurred during the transmission between the system 30 and paging transceiver 100. If an error did occur, then at step 47 the process ends and the paging transceiver 100 is informed of the error. The

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error is preferably presented to the user in the form of status information produced at the user interface 3, such as with an alert tone or visual display on the LED or LCD display. An error may include, but is not limited to, the following errors: "system busy," "wrong ID," or "bill over due." If no error is detected, as determined by the system 30 at step 44, a function is enabled and executed at step 45. The function, as will be described in greater detail below with reference to FIG. 8, may be selected by the user from a group of available functions. At step 46, housekeeping functions are performed both at the paging transceiver 100 and at the system 30 and the call is terminated at step 47.

If the call is from a person as determined at step 42, then the caller is provided with a voice response at step 48 and, with reference to FIG. 4B, the caller is then verbally prompted at step 49 to enter information. At step 50, the caller sends data to the system 30, such as by pressing the telephone keypad to generate DTMF tones. The data that may be sent by the caller includes, but is not limited to, ID code, pass code, mail box number, and subscriber number. The system 30 may respond to voice commands from a caller by utilizing a readily available voice recognition system, such as those presently in use by the telephone company to except collect calls. At 51, the system 30 determines whether an error has occurred. If an error is detected, the caller may be given an opportunity to correct the error or, as shown, the process may end at step 56. If no error was detected by the system 30 at step 51, a message, such as a voice message, is recorded and stored in the storage and retrieval unit 32 at step 52. At step 53, the system 30 determines whether a return receipt or a reply message is requested. If a return receipt or reply message is requested, the return address is entered by the caller or optionally issued by the system 30 and is stored by the system 30 in the storage and retrieval unit 32 at step 54. The system 30, for instance, may detect the address signal of the incoming call and, by default, store this number as the return address. After the return address is stored at step 54 or if a return address is not requested, the stored message is cross referenced to selective call data corresponding to the intended paging transceiver 100 at step 55. Also at step 55, a flag is set in a transmission stack file at the paging terminal controller 31 for subsequently transmitting selective call signals representative of the selective call data to the targeted paging transceiver 100. Housekeeping is performed by the system 30 and the call ends at step 56.

The base station 34, as shown in FIG. 3, comprises a switch 36, a transceiver antenna 37, and a transceiver base station 38. In response to a received message, the system 30 passes control information to switch 36 for setting up a page call. The switch 36, for instance, may be a mobile telephone switching office (MTSO) for interfacing to the transceiver base station 38. In the send page mode, selective call signals having an address associated with the paging transceiver 100 are transmitted. The address may be an address code for a paging transceiver, a mobile telephone number (MIN) for a mobile radiotelephone, or type of identifying information for a communication device.

Command data and information data may also be communicated from the system 30 to the paging transceiver 100 through the base station 34. The command data and information data shall hereinafter be referred to as CI data, examples of which include the following: paging transceiver location, forward message, retrieve message, reply to message, paging transceiver ID, message identifiers, retrieval instructions, save message, erase message, message type, message length, time/date message received, system 30 ID,

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system 30 location, message address, message location, battery life, message identifier, format code, compression type, message age, message priority, alert codes, energy saving commands, memory status, program data, provisioning data, acknowledgment data and requests, function codes, sender name, current time, number of messages, mailbox number, phone number, return address, alpha numeric short messages, general command requests, group calls, and signal strength.

The address and command data and information may be transmitted over any suitable communication system. For instance, the data may be communicated over a paging system, a cellular system having short message service capabilities, such as GSM-SMS, a Cellular Digital Packet Data (CDPD) system, Personal Communications Services, or any other type of mobile radiotelephone system or communication system. Furthermore, the paging transceiver 100 preferably is able to communicate over more than one system, such as with both a paging network and a mobile radiotelephone network.

With reference to FIG. 5, a flow diagram 60 for performing a page call is shown. At step 61, the system 30 locates the current message flag from its transmission stack within paging terminal controller 31 and communicates with base station 34 for setting up a page call. The base station 34 transmits selective call signals and CI data to the targeted paging transceiver 100. At step 62, the system 30 determines whether an acknowledgment (Ack) was received from the paging transceiver 100 indicating that the page call was received. If an acknowledgment was not received, then at step 70 the system 30 determines whether an acknowledgment is a system 30 option. If an acknowledgment is required, then at step 71 the system 30 assigns the page call a priority in the transmission stack and eventually returns to step 61 for re-transmission. If the acknowledgment is received at step 62, the system 30 sets an acknowledgment flag (Ack flag) corresponding to the stored message.

If an acknowledgment is not a system requirement, as determined at step 70, or after posting the acknowledgment flag at step 63, the system 30 sets a timer at step 64 and waits a period of time before proceeding to step 65. At step 65, the paging terminal controller 31 determines if the stored message has been read. If the message has been read, then at step 66 the system 30 posts a read flag in the subscriber data base to indicate that the message was delivered and read and at step 67 the process ends.

If, at step 65, the message had not been read, then at step 68 the system 30 determines the priority of the message and proceeds to step 69. If the priority is high, as determined at step 69, then at step 61 the page call is returned to the transmission stack at the designated priority level for re-transmission. If, on the other hand, the priority is not high as determined at step 69, then the message has a low priority and the process ends at step 67.

An alternate routine 80 for notifying a paging transceiver 100 that an unread message is waiting is shown in FIG. 6. At step 81, the paging terminal controller 31 sorts through subscriber listings which have a corresponding unread and unnotified message in the storage and retrieval unit 32 and sends a page request to base station 34. At step 82, the switch 36 checks a home location registry (HLR) to determine the registered location and status of the remote paging transceiver 100. A page call is processed by transmitting selective call signals from transceiver base station 37 at step 82. If a page acknowledgment is desired for verification that the paging transceiver 100 recipient received the selective call signals, an Ack signal is manually or automatically trans-

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mitted from the paging transceiver 100 to base station 34 for storage in the subscriber database of paging terminal controller 31 at step 82.

At step 83, if an acknowledgement signal was received, a notified flag is set in the subscriber data base corresponding to the unread message stored in the storage and retrieval unit 32 and the paging process for the current unread message ends at step 84. If at step 83 an acknowledgment signal was not received, the message is assigned a new priority and the process is subsequently repeated. Optionally, a plurality of priorities may be assigned to acknowledged and not acknowledged unread messages so that the paging transceiver 100 is sent a number of calls until the message is read by the subscriber.

In the preferred embodiment, the base station 34 is part of a mobile radiotelephone network and the paging transceiver 100 is paged over the designated paging channel or the control channels of the network. In addition to paging the paging transceiver 100, the short messages or other data transmitted to the paging transceiver 100 is also preferably transmitted over the paging channel or control channels. Although the paging is preferably performed through a mobile radiotelephone network, the selective call signals may alternatively be routed to a paging system for transmitting an address code and CI data over an independent paging transmitter. In such a configuration, the paging transceiver 100 may be configured to have a separate paging receiver or transceiver compatible with the paging transmitter or paging transceiver. Since radio pager devices require much less energy than portable cellular telephones, a paging transceiver 100 configured with a low energy paging receiver would reduce energy required for receiving selective call signals and allow high energy circuitry of the paging transceiver 100 to be turned off until the user needs to retrieve or transmit messages. Other variations and modifications will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

A process 90 for receiving messages at a paging transceiver 100 is shown in FIG. 7. A selective call signal including an address is received by receive section 21 of the transceiver 100 at step 91. At step 92, the demodulated signal is processed by the CPU 27 to compare the received address with an address code stored in the CPU 27 memory. If the received address code does not match the stored address, flow returns to step 91 and the transceiver 100 continues to monitor transmissions for its address. When the address corresponds to the pre-stored address code, as determined at step 92, the CPU 27 stores and processes any corresponding received CI data at step 93.

Next, at step 94, the CPU 27 determines if an acknowledgment transmission is required by the paging transceiver 100. The CPU 27 may always enable an acknowledgment in order to confirm at the system 30 or base station 34 that the selective call signals were received by the targeted paging transceiver 100. Alternatively, the CPU 27 may never enable an acknowledgment from the transceiver 100, which is useful in explosive environments where transmissions are dangerous and in environments where a reply from the paging transceiver 100 may cause harmful interference to other electronic equipment. The CPU 27 may, as another option, enable an acknowledgment only when acknowledgment data is contained within the received CI data, such as with a remote request. Finally, the CPU 27 may enable an acknowledgment in response to a user-enabled command.

Returning to step 94, if the paging transceiver 100 allows for an acknowledgment then at step 95 the CPU 27 determines whether the acknowledgment is required or if the acknowledgment is a user option. If the acknowledgment is

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required to be automatic, then an acknowledgment flag is set at step 97. If, on the other hand, the acknowledgment is not automatic but rather optional, then at step 96 the CPU 27 determines whether an acknowledgment has been enabled. If the acknowledgment has been enabled, then the acknowledgment flag is set in step 97.

At step 98, the CPU 27 determines whether short messages may be transmitted. Short messages may include CI data or any type of short coded message which was pre-stored by the user in the paging transceiver 100. If short messages are enabled, at step 99 the CPU 27 sets the short message flag. At step 100, the paging transceiver 100 transmits all flagged data, including CI data, to the base station 34 for processing by the system 30. The CPU 27 generates status information corresponding to received CI data and passes any necessary user status information to the user interface 3 for visual and/or audible reception by the user. For example the user may hear an alert beep, feel an alert vibration, view an LCD indicating the number of unread messages, view an animated graphic display, hear a synthesized voice indicating that an urgent message is waiting, or receive other types of indications. At step 101, the CPU 27 performs house keeping functions and the routine ends.

FIG. 8 depicts a user function flow diagram 110 for user selectable function requests at the paging transceiver 100. At step 111, the user selects a function to be performed from available functions 112 to 117. These functions are exemplary functions that may be available and additional functions may exist. One or more of these functions are preferably selected through the user interface 3. One or more messages may be selected by the user to be forwarded to one or a plurality of addresses or recipients at step 112. Items such as messages and send message lists may be selected by scrolling through the message number or name. The selected messages for forwarding may reside at the paging transceiver 100 or at the system 30. The user may also select the function of saving a selected message at step 113. At step 114, selected messages are retrieved for reproduction and/or storage. At step 115 messages may be sent to one or a plurality of recipients, such as to another paging transceiver 100. At step 116, the selected message may be erased and at step 117, a reply may be sent to the originator of a selected message. With any of the functions selected at steps 112 to 117, the system 30 may act upon the entire information or, alternatively, may instead operate on only the message identifier. For instance, if the user selected the desired action of forwarding a message, the system 30 may send the entire message to a designated recipient or may instead send just the message identifier.

FIG. 9 depicts processing performed by the paging transceiver 100 in response to the selection of any one of the functions 112 to 117 shown in FIG. 8. At step 131, the function is identified by the CPU 27 and other processing occurs prior to step 132 where the CPU 27 determines whether a call is required. If a call is not required to perform the function, then at step 133 the CPU 27 performs the requested function and the process ends at step 140.

If, on the other hand, a call is required, then at step 134 the CPU 27 next determines whether a call is already in progress. If a call is in progress, the CPU 27 exchanges data with the system 30 and base station 34 at step 135 and the function is performed or executed at step 136. The data that is exchanged at step 135 includes a request signal that is sent from the paging transceiver 100 to the system 30 specifying the desired action and the particular information or message. If a call is not in progress, then at step 137 the CPU 27

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preferably asks the user if a call should be made and receives the user's feedback at step 138. If the user elects not to call, then a delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28.

As discussed above, the delay circuit 28 may be a timer which expires at a set time, such as at 1:00 a.m., when traffic and costs are low or may expire after a period of time, such as 1 hour. The set time or the period of time may be programmed by the user or may be determined by default values. Additionally, the delay circuit 28 may operate to delay operation until the signal strength is above a certain threshold. The delay circuit 28, in this example, may therefore comprise a level detector and a comparator circuit for comparing the signal strength to the threshold level. The delay circuit 28 would therefore advantageously delay the paging transceiver 100 from initiating communication until signal strength is sufficiently high. Moreover, the delay circuit 28 may alternatively comprise a communication monitor circuit for determining when the paging transceiver 100 is communicating before performing a function. Also, the delay circuit 28 may detect transmissions and trigger a certain event in response to a received communication. As an example, if the paging transceiver 100 receives a certain type of message or a message from a particular source or individual, the paging transceiver 100 may automatically perform a programmed action. The paging transceiver 100 would therefore be able, for instance, to automatically forward all messages received from one recipient to a designated person.

After the timer 28 is triggered or if the user decides to call now, then at step 139 the CPU 27 sets up a call to the base station 34. Once a call is established, then processing proceeds to step 135 for the exchange of data and then to step 136 for the performance or execution of the function. At step 140, the process ends. The process shown in FIG. 9 is not limited to the performance of a single function but also represents the processing if the user selects a number of functions. For example, the user may select the functions of retrieving a message at step 114 and forwarding a message at step 112 and these functions may be performed in unison with each other or sequentially one after the other.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 may exchange status information during messaging calls initiated by the paging transceiver 100 or by selective call, such as page calls, initiated by the system 30. The status information may contain information corresponding to messages stored within the paging transceiver 100 or within the system 30. For example, if the system 30 erases a message that has resided in its memory for too long a period of time, such as an unsaved, read message, the system 30 may inform the paging transceiver 100 that the message no longer exists. If the message identifier stored in the paging transceiver 100 no longer corresponds to a message stored in the system 30 or in the paging transceiver 100, the CPU 27 removes the identifier for the no-longer existing message.

When the forward message function 112 is selected, flow proceeds to step 131 where the CPU 27 reads information pertaining to the message or plurality of messages selected by the user to be forwarded. The information may include a message identifier, location data, message length, message type, destination addresses, or other CI type data as previously described. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines whether the message cannot be forwarded without communicating with the system 30. At step 134, the CPU 27 determines if a call is in progress. If a call is in progress, CI data is exchanged at step 135 with the system 30 for forwarding messages. If the messages to be forwarded are located at the system 30, the messages are simply flagged for

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forwarding to the appropriate addresses. At step 136, the messages are forwarded and confirmation is communicated to the paging transceiver 100. If the message is not located at system 30, the message is transmitted from the paging transceiver 100 to system 30 at step 136 and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134, it is determined that a call is not in progress, the user is asked if the message should be forwarded now at step 137. If at step 138 the user selects yes, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. If at step 138 the user responds that a call should not be made, the CPU 27 keeps the forwarding information in memory for forwarding the message during a subsequent call with system 30 and a delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28, as described above. After the delay, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. The process ends at step 140.

In operation, the user selects a message or messages to be forwarded and also selects a recipient for receiving the message. If the message resides at the system 30, the message is simply forwarded to the addressed recipient. If the message is located in the paging transceiver 100, the message is first transmitted to the system 30 at step 135 before it can be forwarded to the intended recipient. In order to conserve time, the system 30 will not accept receipt of a message from the paging transceiver 100 if the same message already exists at the system 30. The system 30 will simply perform the required function with the already present duplicate message.

If the function selected is the save message function 113, then at step 131 the message identifier to be saved is read by CPU 27. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines if the message identifier selected corresponds to a message already stored in message memory 5 and if the selected function can be processed off-line. If yes, at step 133 the CPU 27 sets a save message flag in order to protect the message stored in message memory 5 from being over-written and the process ends at step 140.

If at step 132 the CPU 27 determines that the message is not stored at the paging transceiver 100, then at step 134 the CPU 27 determines whether a call is in progress. If a messaging call is in progress, CI data instructing the system 30 to save the message is sent. The system 30 flags the stored message and sends a message saved acknowledgment to the paging transceiver 100 at step 136. The CPU 27 converts the acknowledgment to status information and informs the user that the message is saved at the system 30 and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134, it is determined that the paging transceiver 100 is not currently in communication with the system 30, the CPU 27 flags the message identifier for saving and the user is asked if the call should be made now at step 137. If no, at step 138 the flag is kept for transmission to system 30 at a later time. A delay occurs at step 141 with delay circuit 28 as described above. After the delay, a call is established with system 30 at step 139 and flow continues as previously described. Transmission to system 30 may also take place at a later time, such as during a selective call to the paging transceiver 100 or during a messaging call to system 30. If yes, then the CPU 27 sets up a call at step 139 for transmitting the save flag and CI data as previously described.

When the retrieve message function is selected at 114, then at step 131 the message identifiers corresponding to messages to be returned are read from the CPU 27 memory for retrieving the message. Additionally, the CPU 27 may read message location information, system ID information, address information, message length information, and/or

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message type information as previously described. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines the location of the message and determines if a call to system 30 is required. If the message is stored in message memory 5, then at step 133 the CPU 27 retrieves the message. The message, for instance, may be an audio message, visual message, text message, or electronic signal intended to be transferred to another device.

At step 132, if the message does not reside in message memory 5, the CPU 27 determines that a call is required to retrieve the message and, at step 134, determines if a call is in progress. If a call is in progress, CI data, such as which messages to retrieve, message length, message type, and message identifier, is exchanged at step 135. At step 136, the message is retrieved and simultaneously stored in message memory 5 by the DSP 4. The appropriate status information corresponding to the message is stored by the CPU 27 in its memory and the process ends at step 140. If at step 134 a call is not in progress, the user is asked if the call should be made now or if during another call at step 137. At step 138, if the user chooses to place the call, the call is set up at 139. If the user chooses to delay the call at step 141 until another session or some later time, the message is left flagged for retrieval at the next session or some later time and the process ends at step 140. With the timer 28, the message may be retrieved at a chosen time or a retrieval instruction may be sent from system 30 to paging transceiver 100 for causing the paging transceiver 100 to automatically retrieve a message or plurality of messages at a time designated by system 30. For example it may be desirable to have emergency weather information automatically retrieved during nighttime hours when telephone line charges and air time charges are less expensive. The above described options may also be utilized for forwarding messages, erasing messages, saving messages, sending messages, and replying to messages as will be shown in more detail hereinafter.

With the send message function 115, in order to send a message, the message must first be stored at the paging transceiver 100 or at the system 30. The process of storing or recording messages is well known to those of ordinary skill in the art and accordingly will not be described in further detail. Examples of these devices are described in U.S. Pat. No. 4,602,129 to Matthew, et al., titled "Electronic Audio Communications System With Versatile Message Delivery," and in U.S. Reissued Pat. No. Re. 34,976 to Helferich et al, titled "Analog/Digital Voice Storage Cellular Telephone," both of which are incorporated herein by reference. The system 30 and paging transceiver 100 can record, store and retrieve a plurality of different types of messages as previously described depending on the application required.

If the send message function 115 is selected, the CPU 27 identifies the message to be sent and cross references it to the selected recipient address information. At step 132, the CPU 27 determines whether a call is required. The subsequent processing of sending a message should be apparent from the description above for forwarding a message and accordingly will not be duplicated in order to simplify description of the invention. The message to be sent may reside in the paging transceiver 100 or in the system 30. If the message resides in the system 30 and in the paging transceiver 100, the message in the system 30 corresponding to the CPU 27 message identifier will be sent in order to conserve air time. If the message does not reside in system 30, the message will be sent from the paging transceiver 100 to the system 30. If the message is to be sent from the paging transceiver 100, the message may be a pre-stored message or alternatively, the message may be transmitted to system 30 by paging

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transceiver 100 in real time during a call session between system 30 and paging transceiver 100.

If the erase message function is selected at step 116, the erase message function allows a user to erase messages stored at the system 30 or at the paging transceiver 100 depending on the mode of operation. A message may be erased at a paging transceiver 100 without erasing the message identifier. If a message is erased at the paging transceiver 100 and the identifier still exists in message memory 5, the message can be retrieved from the system 30. In order to remove a message identifier at the paging transceiver 100, the message must be erased at the system 30. This feature causes the user to manage the messages at the platform, thereby conserving memory space at the storage and retrieval unit 32. At step 131, the selected message to be erased is identified and the user is asked if the selected message in the paging transceiver is to be erased or if both copies of the message are to be erased. If the local message only is selected to be erased, the message identification information is kept and at step 133 the CPU 27 flags the message stored in memory 5 for erasure or overwriting. In other words, the message still exists but may be over-written by another message when memory space is required and, until then, may be retrieved from message memory 5. If at step 132 a decision was made to erase both copies of the message, then at step 134 the CPU 27 determines if a call is in progress. If yes, at step 135 the CI data is exchanged instructing system 30 to erase the message. At step 131, the system 30 transmits an acknowledgment that the message was erased, the CPU 27 flags the local message for erasure, the identifier is removed and both copies of the message and the identifiers are erased.

If at step 134 the CPU 27 determines that a call is not in progress, the CPU 27 at step 137 erases the local message and the user is asked if the system 30 copy of the message needs to be erased now. If the user responds yes at step 138, the call is established at step 139 and the process continues as previously described. If the user responds no at step 138, the necessary flags are set for erasing the remote message during the next communication with system 30 after the delay of step 141 and the timer 28 is activated. The timer 28 may be utilized for a timed erase of the message stored at system 30.

The message reply function 117 is for sending a reply to an already received message. A reply message utilizes the same process as the send message function except that a return address is already correlated to the message targeted for a reply. During the send message function 115, the user is required to select an address or destination for the message to be sent. In other words, the user must know the destination or address in advance. The message reply function 117 does not require that the user know the address of the recipient because the message being replied to has a corresponding return address. As with the send message function 115, a reply message may be sent in real time or it may be pre-recorded and stored in the paging transceiver 100 for transmission to system 30. Additionally, the reply transmission may be delayed for a set period of time as previously described with timer 28.

In summary, as discussed above with reference to FIGS. 5 and 6, the system 30 does not transmit the entire message to the paging transceiver 100 but rather notifies the user that a message is waiting. The paging transceiver 100, as discussed above with reference to FIG. 7, stores data associated with the page and possibly a short message. The user can then select a desired one of plurality of available functions,

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such as those shown in FIG. 8, and the paging transceiver 100 will process the request in accordance with FIG. 9.

With the system 30 and paging transceiver 100, the paging transceiver 100 can notify a user of a message without receiving the entire message. The user can then decide to act upon the message at a time convenient to the user. Rather than receiving the message with the alert, as occurs with conventional paging receivers, the user can control the time when he or she wants to receive a message and may even decide not to retrieve the message. After the user has been notified, the user can then control the paging transceiver 100 to retrieve the message from the system 30, to save the message at either the system 30 or paging transceiver 100, to forward the message to an indicated recipient, to reply to the message, or to erase the message from the paging transceiver 100 or from the system 30.

With paging transceiver 100, the user can position the paging transceiver in a desired location before initiating communication with the system 30. Thus, if the user is paged by system 30 while the user is in a subway, basement, or on an airplane, the user can postpone the delivery of the message until the paging transceiver 100 is in a better location to receive and reply to the message. Similarly, the user may be in an explosive environment or near sensitive electronic equipment and may postpone delivery of the message and a reply from the paging transceiver 100 until the user is out of the explosive environment or far enough away from the sensitive electronic equipment. The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 therefore give the user control over the messages stored in the system 30.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 conserve both valuable air time and also paging transceiver message memory 5. The system 30 does not automatically deliver each message to the intended paging transceiver 100 but instead allows the user to exercise control over the message. Since a message may be many bytes in length, perhaps kilobytes, megabytes, or even greater, the benefit to the system 30 and to the base station 34 in not having to transmit each message can be quite substantial. Also, since each message is not automatically delivered to the paging transceiver 100, the paging transceiver 100 does not become overloaded with messages and instead the user can choose to act on selective messages, such as by retrieving only certain messages. The user, additionally, may decide not to act on any of the messages through base station 34 and may call the system 30 through the PSTN 35, thereby bypassing the base station 34 and its associated charges and expenses.

The paging transceiver 100 and system 30 are not limited to voice messages in a paging system. Rather, the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 may operate with any type of message or information, including, but not limited to numeric messages, alphanumeric messages, voice or other audio messages, video messages, graphics or even data. The paging transceiver 100 may be a separate paging transceiver, may be integral with a mobile radiotelephone, or may be incorporated into other devices.

For instance, the paging transceiver 100 may be integrated into a portable radio, CD, or tape player. The paging transceiver 100 could receive messages from system 30 which indicate portions of songs that may be sampled by the user. The user may browse through a listing of available music and select a desired song. The paging transceiver 100 then communicates with the system 30 to retrieve the selected song and the user can then play the song at the paging transceiver 100.

As another example, the messages may be video messages which the user can browse through and select only

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desired messages. The paging transceiver 100 may be integral with a television set and the video messages may be promotions for new movies or shows. Alternatively, the paging transceiver 100 may be integral with a game console and the video messages may be clips of new games that are available with that game console. Other applications for the paging transceiver 100 and system 30 will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The information or message available to a paging transceiver 100 need not be static but instead may be dynamic. In other words, when a paging transceiver 100 is alerted that information is available, the information may be updated or otherwise change from the time that the user was alerted. As an example, the user may receive a weather alert and by the time the user decides to receive the information the information would be updated to reflect current weather conditions. The identifier for the information therefore does not limit the content that may be stored as the information available to the user.

The system 30 is not limited to transmitting only one alert at a time to one paging transceiver 100. Instead, the system 30 may send a plurality of alerts to a single paging transceiver 100 and each of those alerts may be broadcast to a plurality of paging transceivers 100. For instance, the system 30 may broadcast information to a plurality of transceivers 100 that share a common set of numbers within their mobile identification numbers. If the system 30 sends a plurality of alerts to a paging transceiver 100, these alerts may be displayed by the user interface 3 and the user can scroll through and act upon the messages as desired.

As discussed above, the system 30 and paging transceiver 100 allows information to be remotely acted upon by the paging transceiver 100. The system 30, however, also allows users access to their information via conventional ways, such as the PSTN 35. Therefore, a user may receive the alert with a paging transceiver 100 and decide to call in through the PSTN 35 to listen or otherwise act upon the message. The system 30 preferably is connected to the Internet whereby users can also gain access and act upon their information via the Internet.

The paging transceiver 100 preferably alerts the user both when a message identifier signal has been received and when complete messages have been received. The alerts may comprise any suitable indication to inform the user that the paging transceiver 100 has received a communication, such as a tone, vibration, or visual display. The alerts for a received identifier and for a received message are preferably different so as to allow a user to easily differentiate between the two communications.

The example provided in FIG. 3 was a single system 30 for storing messages on behalf of a plurality of paging transceivers 100. The invention, however, may include any number of systems 30 for storing messages with each system 30 storing information for a transceiver 100 being considered a content provider. For instance, as shown in FIG. 10, a messaging system 200 may comprise a plurality of systems 30 connected to the PSTN 35 with system 30A being associated with base station 34A and transceiver antenna 37A and system 30B being associated with base station 34B and transceiver antenna 37B. Although three systems 30 are shown, the system 200 may include any number of systems 30 and, although two base stations 34 are shown, each system 30 may be associated with a base station 34 and transceiver antenna 37 or only one of the systems 30 may be associated with a base station 34 and transceiver antenna 37. Furthermore, each system 30 need not include a paging terminal controller 31 or a storage unit 32. System 30C, for

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instance, may include a storage and retrieval unit 32 and input/output controller 33 but not a paging terminal controller 31 and may page the paging transceiver 100 through the paging terminal controller 31 in system 30A. Conversely, a system 30, such as system 30A, may include a paging terminal controller 31 and an input/output controller 33 but not a storage and retrieval unit 32. Further, the input/output controller 33 need not be a separate unit but may be incorporated into the paging terminal controller 31 if the system 30 does not include a storage and retrieval unit 32, or into the storage and retrieval unit 32, if the system 30 does not include a paging terminal controller 31. The systems 30 and base stations 34 may communicate with each other through the PSTN 35 or through links or lines other than or in addition to the PSTN 35, such as through an SS7 backbone of a wireless network or through the Internet.

Additionally, each of the base stations 34A and 34B may be part of a paging network but are preferably part of a cellular network. Either one or both of base stations 34A or 34B may page the paging transceiver and either one or both of the base stations 34A or 34B may deliver the contents of messages to the paging transceiver. Each of the systems 30A, 30B, and 30C may store messages on behalf of a user with the messages being of the same or different types. Furthermore, the messages stored within a single system 30 may be all the same type or may differ from each other.

As an example, system 30A may store voice mail messages and email messages directed to the user's office, system 30B may store voice mail messages directed to the user's home, and system 30C may store audio messages. The base station 34A acts as a clearinghouse for all messages delivered to the user to any of the systems 30 and pages the paging transceiver 100 whenever a message is received. Thus, when a voice mail message or email message is received at system 30A, the system 30A delivers a page to base station 34A which is then delivered to paging transceiver 100. When a voice message is received at system 30B, the system 30B sends information about the message to system 30A and system 30A then delivers a page to base station 34A for delivering the page to the paging transceiver 100. Similarly, when system 30C has an audio message it notifies system 30A and system 30A acts to have the page delivered to the paging transceiver 100.

An example of the data transmission 201 sent from system 30B or 30C to system 30A is shown in FIG. 11. The data transmission 201 includes system ID information for identifying the system 30 from a potential plurality of systems 30. The system ID information may be an address code or may comprise the telephone number of the system 30 and may be automatically captured by system 30A, such as from Caller ID or from DNIS information. The data message 201 also identifies the paging transceiver(s) 100, such as with an address code or MIN. For many systems 30, the message or information stored will often be for a single user whereby the transceiver ID would be the address code or MIN for that single paging transceiver 100. For other systems 30, however, the system 30 may want to broadcast a single message to a plurality of paging transceivers 100 whereby the transceiver ID may be a code that identifies a predefined group of paging transceivers 100.

The data transmission 201 also includes message information. The message information includes information identifying the message and preferably also includes information specifying the type of the message, the length of the message, and the message priority. The message identification may identify the message with a unique code, such as a number, or may specify the address in system 30 for the

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message. The message type advantageously indicates whether the message is a voice message, email message, audio message, video message, or text message. The message length indicates the size of the message and the message priority indicates the priority level of the message. For instance, the user can designate priorities based upon the telephone number of the caller leaving the message or the priority may be set by the caller. Although the data transmission 201 preferably includes this information, the data transmission 201 may include additional or fewer fields than the example provided in FIG. 11.

The data transmission 201 also includes additional information that may be relayed and presented to the user. For instance, for many systems 30 that receive and store messages on behalf of the user, the additional descriptive information preferably comprises a return address for identifying the caller's telephone number to inform the user as to who left the message. For other systems 30 which may generate their own information, the additional information preferably describes the information available to the user. For instance, for a system 30 that allows users to sample songs, the additional information would indicate the title and the artist of the song and may also specify the cost to retrieve and play the song. Other uses of the additional information will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The page sent to the paging transceiver 100 includes most, if not all, of the data transmission 201. The information transmitted to the paging transceiver 100, with reference to FIG. 7, may be inserted into a short message transmitted to the user at step 98. From the system ID information, the paging transceiver 100 can determine which system 30 it needs to respond to in order to act upon a message. For instance, system 30A may page the paging transceiver 100 and indicate that system 30B has a stored message. If the user selects the retrieve message function, then the paging transceiver 100 can contact system 30B through base station 34B to retrieve the desired message. The paging transceiver 100 as discussed above may instead respond to base station 34A to retrieve the message and base station 34A would communicate with system 30B to retrieve or otherwise act upon the message.

The message information is used by the paging transceiver 100 to inform the user of the message or information stored at the system 30. The message type, length, priority, and additional descriptive material may be displayed or otherwise indicated to the user at the paging transceiver 100. From this information, the user can decide what type of action to take upon the message or information at the system 30.

As described with reference to FIG. 9, a call to the system 30 may be required in order for the paging transceiver 100 to perform a desired function. If a call is required, the paging transceiver 100 relays information in the data transmission 201 to the system 30. If the paging transceiver 100 responds to a system 30 other than the one storing the message or information, the paging transceiver 100 identifies the system 30 storing the message or information and also identifies the message. As discussed above, the message may be identified in a number of ways, such as with a message code or by specifying the location in memory where the message is stored. The call to the system 30 would automatically provide the transceiver identification information to the system 30, although the paging transceiver 100 could provide this information with the other information provided to the system 30.

Upon receiving a call from the paging transceiver 100, the system 30 reads the transceiver identification and message

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information to find the information requested by the paging transceiver 100. The information obtained from the paging transceiver 100 at the system 30 and the transfer of the requested information to the paging transceiver occurs at step 135 in FIG. 9.

The system 200 can present substantial cost savings to conventional paging systems. With a conventional paging system, the entire message is transmitted to the location of the paging transceiver 100. For instance, if the user's home base is in Chapel Hill, N.C., and the message originates in Chicago, Ill., then the message is typically sent over the PSTN 35 to the home base. With nationwide paging, the user may have traveled to San Diego, Calif. whereby the home base would then send the entire message from Chapel Hill to San Diego. With system 200, on the other hand, only the data transmission 201 is transmitted from Chicago to Chapel Hill and from Chapel Hill to San Diego. The actual message, in contrast, is sent directly from the storage facility in Chicago to San Diego, thereby reducing charges associated with the transfer between Chicago and Chapel Hill. Moreover, the data transmissions 201 between systems 30 may occur over the Internet. These transmissions, for instance, may be formatted according to the Voice Profile for Internet Mail (VPIM) and the addresses of the transceivers 100 may be determined from an open directory service, such as the Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) or X.500.

The systems 30 and 200 allow a user to easily manage the multitude of messages that are commonly received every day. Conventionally, a user would have to call in to the office voice mail to retrieve voice messages, call home to retrieve voice messages sent to the house, and connect with the computer network at the office to retrieve email messages. Although paging systems have been used to notify a user that a voice mail message or other message has been received, the user would still have to call in to a separate system to actually retrieve the message. The system 200, on the other hand, enables a user to be notified of all messages, regardless of their type and regardless of their location and furthermore allows the user to selectively retrieve, save, erase or perform other functions on the messages. The systems 30 and 200 and paging transceiver 100, moreover, allow the user to exercise control over the remotely stored messages; the user can selectively store, save, retrieve, erase, forward, send or otherwise perform operations on messages stored at a remote location.

The foregoing description of the preferred embodiments of the invention has been presented only for the purpose of illustration and description and is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed. Many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching.

The embodiments were chosen and described in order to explain the principles of the invention and their practical application so as to enable others skilled in the art to utilize the invention and various embodiments and with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.

What is claimed is:

1. In a communication system that includes a first system, a second system, a base station, and a wireless communication device, a method, comprising:

receiving, at the first system, a data transmission from the second system, the data transmission including a system identifier that is associated with the second system and an information identifier that is associated with information stored in the second system, wherein the information is not included in the data transmission and

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is not stored in the wireless communication device, the first system having an interface with a home location registry;

generating a message which includes the system identifier and the information identifier;

transmitting, from the first system, the message to the base station for transmission to the wireless communication device.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving, at the base station, a request message wirelessly transmitted from the wireless communication device, the request message including at least a portion of the generated message.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising transmitting, from the second system, to the wireless communication device, the information associated with the information identifier in response to receiving the request message.

4. In a communication system that includes a first system, a second system located remotely from the first system, a base station, and a wireless communication device, a method comprising:

receiving, at the second system, a message intended for a user of the wireless communication device;

storing, at the second system, the message;

transmitting, from the second system, information regarding the message to the first system, the information including a system identifier that is associated with the second system and a message identifier associated with the message, the first system having an interface with a home location registry;

wherein the first system uses the base station to transmit at least a portion of the information to the wireless communication device; and

receiving, at the second system, a request message transmitted from the wireless communication device, the request message that includes at least a portion of the information, wherein the request message was wirelessly transmitted from the wireless communication device to a base station.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the request message further includes an action identifier identifying an action to be performed on the message.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the second system performing the action on the message.

7. A method of operating a wireless communication device in a communication system that includes a plurality of information storage systems, and a mobile radiotelephone network comprising:

receiving a notification message from the mobile radiotelephone network, the notification message including (a) a system identifier identifying a particular one of the plurality of information storage systems and (b) a message identifier identifying information that is stored in at least one of the plurality of information storage systems and which information is intended for a user of the wireless communication device;

alerting the user that the notification message has been received;

receiving input from the user specifying an action to be performed on the information corresponding to the notification message; and

transmitting via a mobile radiotelephone network, to the information storage system identified by the system identifier, an action identifier corresponding to the action specified by the user;

alerting the user that the action specified by the user has been completed.

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8. A mobile communication device that transmit is data to and receives data from a communication system, comprising:

a radio receiver coupled to antenna and configured to receive a notification message from a first remote system, the notification message including a system identifier identifying a second remote system and an information identifier identifying information stored in the second remote system;

a user interface including at least a keypad and a display screen coupled to the receiver and configured to receive from a user an input specifying an action to be performed on the information stored in the second remote system;

a controller including a processor coupled to the receiver and user interface and programmed to generate a request message indicating the action to be performed on the information and for addressing the request message to the second remote system; and

a transmitter coupled to the antenna and configured to transmit the request message to the second remote system;

the controller configured to notify the user when the action to be performed on the information has been completed.

9. A method that communicates data from a content provider through a mobile radiotelephone network to a wireless communication device, utilizing an content notification system having an interface with a home location registry comprising:

the content provider initiating communication of data intended for the wireless communication device, the data including an information identifier that is associated with information stored by the content provider and identifies the location of the stored information, wherein the information is not included in the data and is not stored in the wireless communication device;

the content provider causing the content notification system to: process the data into a message suitable for transmission to the wireless communication device, which message includes the information identifier, and transmit the message to the wireless communication device; and

the content provider receiving a request message that is wirelessly transmitted from the wireless communication device over the mobile radiotelephone network as a reply to the message, the request message including at least a portion of the information identifier.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the content provider communicating the information associated with the information identifier and intended for the wireless communication device in response to the content provider receiving the request message.

11. The method of claim 9 further comprising the content provider causing the mobile radio telephone network to rely the information identifier to a plurality of wireless communication devices.

12. The method of claim 9 wherein the information identifier identifies the location of the stored information using a system identifier.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the system identifier is associated with the content provider.

14. The method of claim 9 wherein the mobile radiotelephone network includes at least a cellular digital packet data system.

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15. The method of claim 9 wherein the mobile radiotelephone network includes at least short message service capabilities.

16. The method of claim 9 wherein the mobile radiotelephone network includes at least a global system for mobile communications (GSM) system.

17. The method of claim 9 wherein the mobile radiotelephone network includes at least a personal communications services (PCS) system.

18. The method of claim 9 wherein the wireless communication device is capable of communicating via multiple types of wireless networks.

19. The method of claim 9 wherein the content provider includes a system that stores data intended for delivery to the wireless communication device.

20. The method of claim 9 wherein the information includes at least one of the group consisting of: (1) voice, (2) email, (3) audio, (4) video, (5) graphics, (6) games, and (7) text.

21. The method of claim 1 wherein the first system accesses the home location registry to retrieve information associated with the wireless communication device.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the information retrieved comprises the wireless network location of the wireless communication device.

23. The method of claim 3 wherein the information transmission bypasses the first system.

24. The method of claim 4 wherein the first system accesses the home location registry to retrieve information associated with the wireless communication device.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the information retrieved comprises the wireless network location of the wireless communication device.

26. The method of claim 6 wherein the action is performed without having sent the message to the wireless communication device.

27. The method of claim 6 further comprising the message being sent to the wireless communication device by the second system wherein the message bypasses the first system.

28. The method of claim 6 wherein the action is to forward the message to another.

29. The method of claim 6 wherein the action is to save the message.

30. The method of claim 6 wherein the action is to delete the message.

31. The method of claim 7 wherein at least one of the alerts comprises an audible alert.

32. The method of claim 7 wherein at least one of the alerts comprises a graphic alert.

33. The method of claim 7 wherein at least one of the alerts comprises a vibration alert.

34. The method of claim 7 further comprising receiving further input from the user indicating that the wireless communication device should save the received notification but not the message.

35. The method of claim 8 further comprising receiving further input from the user indicating that the wireless communication device should save the received notification but not the message.

36. The method of claim 9 wherein the information identifier system accesses the home location registry to retrieve information associated with the wireless communication device.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein the information retrieved comprises the wireless network location of the wireless communication device.

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38. A method of notifying a cellular phone of information available at a content storage and retrieval unit utilizing a notification system that includes a notification terminal controller coupled with an input/output controller comprising:

receiving, at the notification system, a data transmission from the content storage and retrieval unit, the data transmission including a system identifier that is associated with the content storage and retrieval unit and an information identifier that is associated with information stored in the content storage and retrieval unit; the notification system having an interface with a home location registry; causing the notification system to relay a notification to the cellular phone that identifies the information and its location.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification system accesses the home location registry to retrieve information associated with the cellular phone.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein the information retrieved comprises the wireless network location of the cellular phone.

41. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification system creates the notification.

42. The method of claim 38 wherein the content storage and retrieval unit creates the notification.

43. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification identifies the information's location by using at least a system identifier.

44. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification identifies the information's location by using at least a system address.

45. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification further comprises a format code with regard to the message.

46. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification further comprises retrieval instructions with regard to the message.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein the retrieval instructions specify when the message is to be retrieved by the cellular phone.

48. The method of claim 38 wherein the information comprises video.

49. The method of claim 38 wherein the information comprises promotional video for a movie.

50. The method of claim 38 wherein the information comprises promotional video for a show.

51. The method of claim 38 wherein the information comprises music.

52. The method of claim 38 wherein the content storage and retrieval unit is coupled to the wired Internet and configured such that a user may act upon the information by a wired Internet connection.

53. The method of claim 52 wherein the user may retrieve the information over the wired Internet.

54. The method of claim 38 wherein a transmission between the content storage and retrieval unit and the notification system is formatted at least in part according to the voice profile for internet mail.

55. The method of claim 38 wherein the storage and retrieval unit is adapted to store voice messages.

56. The method of claim 55 wherein the storage and retrieval unit is further adapted to receive voice messages.

57. The method of claim 56 wherein the storage and retrieval unit is further adapted to record voice messages.

58. The method of claim 38 wherein an address for the cellular phone is determined from a lightweight directory access protocol.

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59. The method of claim 38 wherein the content storage and retrieval unit receives a request, the request sent from the cellular phone in response to a received notification, the request including an indication that an action be performed on the information.

60. The method of claim 59 wherein the request to the content storage and retrieval unit does not pass through the notification system.

61. The method of claim 59 wherein the action comprises one or more of forward the information, delete the information, or save the information.

62. The method of claim 61 wherein the content storage and retrieval unit has not received a request from the cellular phone indicating the action to be performed is to receive the information at the cellular phone.

63. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification system correlates messages in the content and storage and retrieval unit with subscriber listings.

64. The method of claim 38 wherein the information changes after the notification is sent but before the content storage and retrieval unit receives a request sent by the cellular phone in response to a received notification, and in response to subsequently receiving a request from the cellular phone, the content storage and retrieval unit acts upon the changed information according to the request received from the cellular phone and not the originally notified information.

65. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification system receives information from the cellular phone regarding the amount of available memory in the cellular phone.

66. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification system informs the cellular phone user via the cellular phone that the user's message account has insufficient funds.

67. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification system, the content storage and retrieval unit, or both include voice recognition capabilities.

68. The method of claim 67 wherein the notification system, the content storage and retrieval unit, or both being adapted to respond to a recognized voice instruction.

69. The method of claim 38 further comprising the notification including an indication of the type of information.

70. The method of claim 69 wherein the type includes a text type, a picture type, a video type, an audio type, or a music type.

71. A method of notifying a cellular phone of information available at a content storage and retrieval unit utilizing at least two notification systems each including a notification terminal coupled with an input/output controller comprising:

receiving, at a first notification system, a data transmission from the content storage and retrieval unit, the data transmission including a system identifier that is associated with the content storage and retrieval unit and an information identifier that is associated with information stored in the content storage and retrieval unit; causing the first notification system to relay a first notification to a second notification system, the first notification identifying the information and its location; the receipt of the first notification at the second notification system causing the second notification system to relay a second notification to the cellular phone, the second notification identifying the information and its location.

72. The method of claim 71 wherein communication between notification systems is over at least an SS7 network.

73. The method of claim 71 wherein communication between notification systems is over at least the Internet.

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74. The method of claim 71 wherein the first notification system has an interface with a home location registry.

75. The method of claim 74 wherein the first notification system accesses the home location registry to retrieve information associated with the cellular phone.

76. The method of claim 75 wherein the information retrieved comprises the wireless network location of the cellular phone.

77. The method of claim 71 wherein the second notification system has an interface with a home location registry.

78. The method of claim 77 wherein the second notification system accesses the home location registry to retrieve information associated with the cellular phone.

79. The method of claim 78 wherein the information retrieved comprises the wireless network location of the cellular phone.

80. The method of claim 71 wherein the first and second notifications contain the same data regarding the information and its location.

81. The method of claim 71 wherein the second notification system receives a request from the cellular phone to perform an action on the information and relays the request to the content storage and retrieval unit.

82. The method of claim 81 wherein the request is not relayed through the first notification system.

83. The method of claim 81 wherein the content storage and retrieval unit retrieves the information and transmits the information to the cellular phone.

84. The method of claim 83 wherein the information transmission does not go through the first notification system.

85. A method of remotely controlling content stored on a content storage and retrieval unit coupled to a notification system, the notification system including a notification terminal controller coupled with an input/output controller, and adapted to provide notifications to the cellular phone of content available from the content storage and retrieval unit comprising:

storing message content at the content storage and retrieval unit;

the notification system transmitting a notification to the cellular phone of the content being available at the content storage and retrieval unit, wherein the notification includes an identification of the content storage and retrieval unit;

receiving a request to perform an action on the notified content sent from the cellular phone at the content storage and retrieval unit, wherein neither the content storage and retrieval unit nor the notification system has transmitted the content to the cellular phone;

the content storage and retrieval unit performing the action on the notified content.

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86. The method of claim 85 wherein the requested action is for the content storage and retrieval unit to forward the content, save the content, delete the content, reply to the content, or a combination thereof.

87. The method of claim 86 wherein the content storage and retrieval unit performs the one or more requested actions without having transmitted the notified content.

88. The method of claim 85 wherein the content comprises audio data.

89. The method of claim 85 wherein the content comprises image data.

90. The method of claim 85 wherein the content comprises video data.

91. The method of claim 85, wherein the cellular phone communicates by at least one of the following: a global system for mobile communications network (GSM), a cellular data packet data network (CDPD), a personal communications services network (PCS), or a short message service (SMS).

92. A notification system adapted to notify a cellular phone of contents available at a content storage and retrieval unit, comprising:

a notification controller;

an input/output controller coupled to the notification controller, the input/output controller adapted to interface to at least a base station, a home location registry, and the content storage and retrieval unit;

wherein the notification system is configured to:

receive, from the content storage and retrieval unit, information identifying content available for an intended recipient;

form a notification of the content, wherein the notification identifies the information and the information's location; and

relay the notification to the cellular phone.

93. The notification system of claim 92 wherein the input/output controller is configured to access information about the cellular phone from the home location registry.

94. The notification system of claim 93 wherein the information accessed by the input/output controller from the home location registry comprises the wireless network location of the cellular phone.

95. The notification system of claim 92 wherein the notification system is configured to communicate with a second notification system over at least an SS7 network.

96. The notification system of claim 92 wherein the notification system is configured to communicate with a second notification system over at least the Internet.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 7,280,838 B2
APPLICATION NO. : 11/082913
DATED : October 9, 2007
INVENTOR(S) : Richard J. Helferich

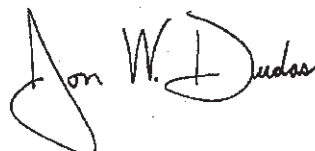
Page 1 of 1

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 21, line 1, the words "that trasnmit is data" should read --that transmits data--.

Signed and Sealed this

Eleventh Day of November, 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon W. Dudas". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "J" and a distinct "D".

JON W. DUDAS
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 7,280,838 B2
APPLICATION NO. : 11/082913
DATED : October 9, 2007
INVENTOR(S) : Richard J. Helferich

Page 1 of 1

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 22, line 56, "but not the message" should be changed to --message but not the information--.

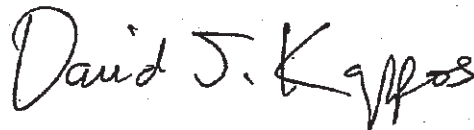
Column 22, line 57, "The method of claim 8 further comprising receiving" should be changed to --The device of claim 8 wherein the user interface is configured to receive--.

Column 22, line 60, "but not the message" should be changed to --message but not the information--.

Column 22, line 61, "information identifier" should be changed to --content notification--.

Signed and Sealed this

Twenty-second Day of December, 2009

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Kappos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David J. Kappos
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office



US007280838C1

(12) **EX PARTE REEXAMINATION CERTIFICATE (8930th)**
United States Patent
Helferich

(10) Number: **US 7,280,838 C1**(45) Certificate Issued: ***Mar. 27, 2012**

(54) **PAGING TRANSCEIVERS AND METHODS FOR SELECTIVELY RETRIEVING MESSAGES**

(75) Inventor: **Richard J. Helferich**, Encinitas, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **Helferich Patent Licensing, LLC**, Chicago, IL (US)

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Reexamination Certificate for:

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 Filed: **Mar. 18, 2005**

(*) Notice: This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

Certificate of Correction issued Nov. 11, 2008.

Certificate of Correction issued Dec. 22, 2009.

Related U.S. Application Data

(62) Division of application No. 09/688,321, filed on Oct. 13, 2000, now Pat. No. 7,003,304, which is a division of application No. 08/934,143, filed on Sep. 19, 1997, now Pat. No. 6,233,430.

(51) Int. Cl. **H04W 68/00** (2006.01)

(52) U.S. Cl. **455/458; 340/6.11; 340/7.21; 455/466; 455/550.1**

(58) Field of Classification Search None
 See application file for complete search history.

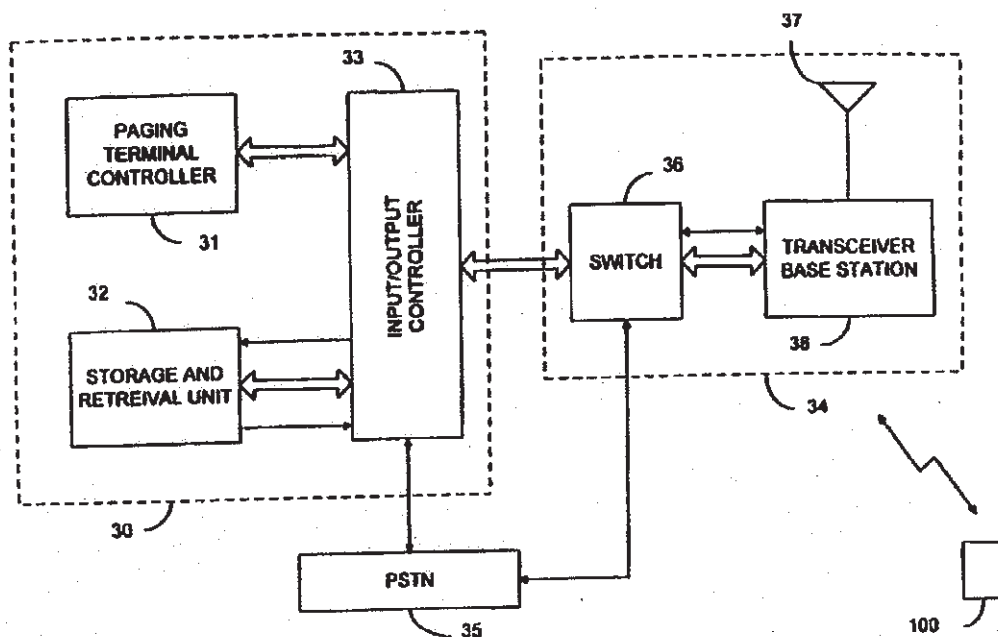
(56) **References Cited**

To view the complete listing of prior art documents cited during the proceeding for Reexamination Control Number 90/009,883, please refer to the USPTO's public Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system under the Display References tab.

Primary Examiner—Salman Ahmed

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A paging transceiver and method for selectively paging provides a page to a paging transceiver but does not automatically provide an associated message. The paging transceiver receives the page and alerts the user that a message is waiting and preferably provides a short description of the message. The user can then download or otherwise act on the message at a time and at a place convenient to the user. The user can therefore place the paging transceiver in a location where it can easily receive and reply to the message. The paging system conserves air time and the paging transceiver conserves memory by not automatically receiving the associated messages. The user can determine the time at which the paging transceiver receives transmissions, such as during off-peak hours. The messages stored by the systems and delivered to the paging transceiver may be of different types, such as voice, text, audio, or even video. In addition to messages, the paging system can store other information for the user, such as songs or video clips that the user can sample or updates on weather or stock rates.



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EX PARTE
REEXAMINATION CERTIFICATE
ISSUED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 307

THE PATENT IS HEREBY AMENDED AS
INDICATED BELOW.

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [] appeared in the patent, but has been deleted and is no longer a part of the patent; matter printed in italics indicates additions made to the patent.

AS A RESULT OF REEXAMINATION, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT:

The patentability of claims 1-6, 9-44 and 48-84 is confirmed.

Claims 7, 8, 45-47, 85 and 92 are determined to be patentable as amended.

Claims 86-91 and 93-96, dependent on an amended claim, are determined to be patentable.

New claims 97-110 are added and determined to be patentable.

7. A method of operating a wireless communication device in a communication system that includes a plurality of information storage systems, and a mobile radiotelephone network comprising:

receiving a notification message from the mobile radiotelephone network, the notification message including (a) a system identifier identifying a particular one of the plurality of information storage systems and (b) a message identifier identifying information that is stored in at least one of the plurality of information storage systems and which information is intended for a user of the wireless communication device;

alerting the user that the notification message has been received;

receiving input from the user specifying an action to delete, forward, or reply to be performed on the information corresponding to the notification message; and

transmitting via a mobile radiotelephone network, to the information storage system identified by the system identifier, an action identifier corresponding to the action specified by the user;

alerting the user that the action specified by the user has been completed.

8. A mobile communication device that transmits data to and receives data from a communication system, comprising:

a radio receiver coupled to antenna and configured to receive a notification message from a first remote system, the notification message including a system identifier identifying a second remote system and an information identifier identifying information stored in the second remote system;

a user interface including at least a keypad and a display screen coupled to the receiver and configured to receive from a user an input specifying an action to be performed on the information stored in the second remote system;

a controller including a processor coupled to the receiver and user interface and programmed to generate a

request message indicating the action to delete, forward, or reply to be performed on the information and for addressing the request message to the second remote system; and

a transmitter coupled to the antenna and configured to transmit the request message to the second remote system;

the controller configured to notify the user when the action to be performed on the information has been completed.

45. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification further comprises a format code with regard to the [message] information.

46. The method of claim 38 wherein the notification further comprises retrieval instructions with regard to the [message] information.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein the retrieval instructions specify when the [message] information is to be retrieved by the cellular phone.

85. A method of remotely controlling content stored on a content storage and retrieval unit coupled to a notification system, the notification system including a notification terminal controller coupled with an input/output controller, and adapted to provide notifications to the cellular phone of content available from the content storage and retrieval unit comprising:

storing message content at the content storage and retrieval unit;

the notification system transmitting a notification to the cellular phone of the content being available at the content storage and retrieval unit, wherein the notification includes an identification of the content storage and retrieval unit;

receiving a request to perform an action on the notified content, the action to delete, forward, or reply to the content, sent from the cellular phone at the content storage and retrieval unit, wherein neither the content storage and retrieval unit nor the notification system has transmitted the content to the cellular phone, and wherein the request received at the content storage and retrieval unit bypasses the notification system such that the notification system did not receive a request regarding the notified content;

the content storage and retrieval unit performing the action on the notified content.

92. A notification system adapted to notify a cellular phone of contents available at a content storage and retrieval unit, comprising:

a notification controller;

an input/output controller coupled to the notification controller, the input/output controller adapted to interface to at least a base station, a home location registry, and the content storage and retrieval unit;

wherein the notification system is configured to:

receive, from the content storage and retrieval unit, information identifying content available for an intended recipient;

form a notification of the content, wherein the notification identifies the information and the information's location such that the notification is usable by the cellular phone to request the content from the content storage and retrieval unit via a cellular network in a way that bypasses the notification system; and

relay the notification to the cellular phone.

97. The method of claim 9, wherein the information is updated after the message is transmitted to the wireless com-

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munication device and before the content provider receives a request message from the wireless communication device.

98. The method of claim 97, wherein the content provider, subsequent to receiving the request message, causes the updated information to be delivered to the wireless communication device via a mobile radiotelephone network.

99. The method of claim 9, wherein the data further indicates a time the content is available.

100. The method of claim 9, wherein the content provider receives the information identifier from an identification service.

101. The method of claim 9, wherein the request message is received at the identified location of the stored information.

102. The method of claim 9, further comprising the content provider performing a command on the information received from the wireless communication device prior to transmitting the information to the wireless communication device.

103. The method of claim 102, wherein the command is to delete, forward, or reply to the information.

104. The method of claim 9, wherein the data further includes a plurality of address identifiers corresponding to a plurality of mobile wireless communication devices.

105. The method of claim 9 wherein the location of the stored information establishes to a recipient the address of the particular system to which to respond.

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106. The method of claim 9, wherein the information identifier is encoded and identifies directly or indirectly the stored information and its location.

107. The method of claim 9, wherein the content provider initiating communication of data intended for the wireless communication device comprises the content provider electronically communicating the data to the notification system via the Internet.

108. The method of claim 9, wherein at least a portion of the data for which the content provider initiates communication may be determined from a directory service.

109. The method of claim 9, wherein the content provider causing the content notification system to process the data into a message suitable for transmission to the wireless communication device comprises causing the notification system to format the data as a short message for transmission via SMS.

110. The method of claim 9, wherein the content provider receiving a request message that is wirelessly transmitted from the wireless communication device over the mobile radiotelephone network as a reply to the message comprises receiving a request from the wireless communication device in response to receipt of the message to receive the content.

* * * * *

Exhibit D



US007499716B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Helferich

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 7,499,716 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Mar. 3, 2009**

- (54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR DELIVERING INFORMATION TO A TRANSMITTING AND RECEIVING DEVICE**
- (75) **Inventor:** **Richard J. Helferich**, Encinitas, CA (US)
- (73) **Assignee:** **Wireless Science, LLC**, Chatsworth, CA (US)
- (*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

(21) **Appl. No.:** **11/399,513**

(22) **Filed:** **Apr. 7, 2006**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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H04Q 7/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **455/458; 455/31.3; 455/412; 455/418; 340/311.1; 340/825.44**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **455/3.05, 455/403, 412.1, 412.2, 413, 414.4, 414.1, 455/414.3, 458, 463, 466, 74, 550.1, 575.6, 455/95, 100**

See application file for complete search history.

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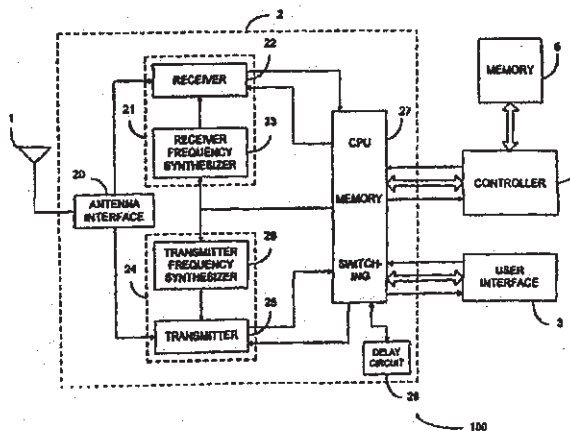
Primary Examiner—Tony T. Nguyen

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides systems and method for delivering information to a transmitting and receiving device. The device receives a notification alerting a user of the device that information is available to be obtained and, in some embodiments, providing a short description of the information. After receiving the notification at the device, the user can then use the device to obtain or otherwise act on the information at a time and at a place convenient to the user.

69 Claims, 12 Drawing Sheets



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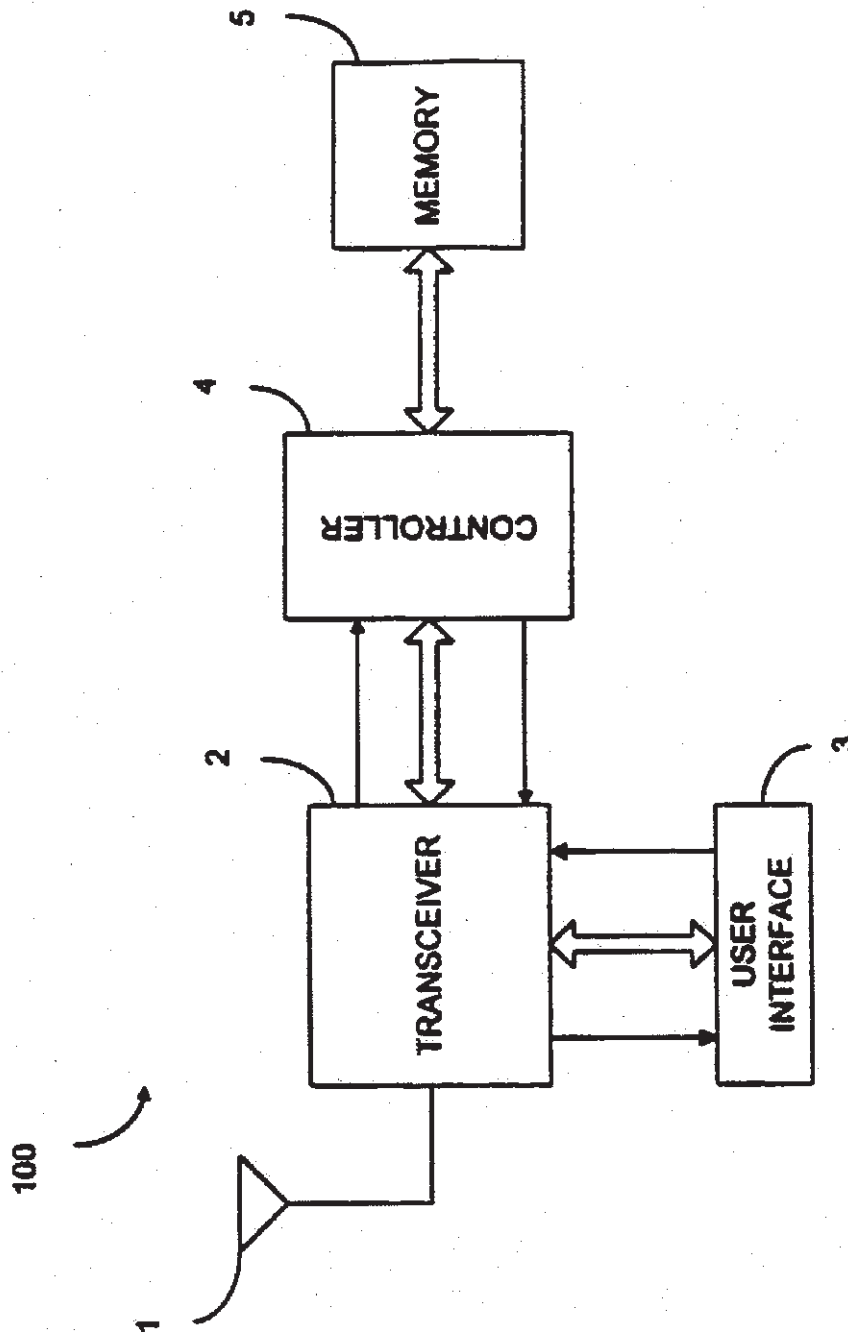


FIG. 1

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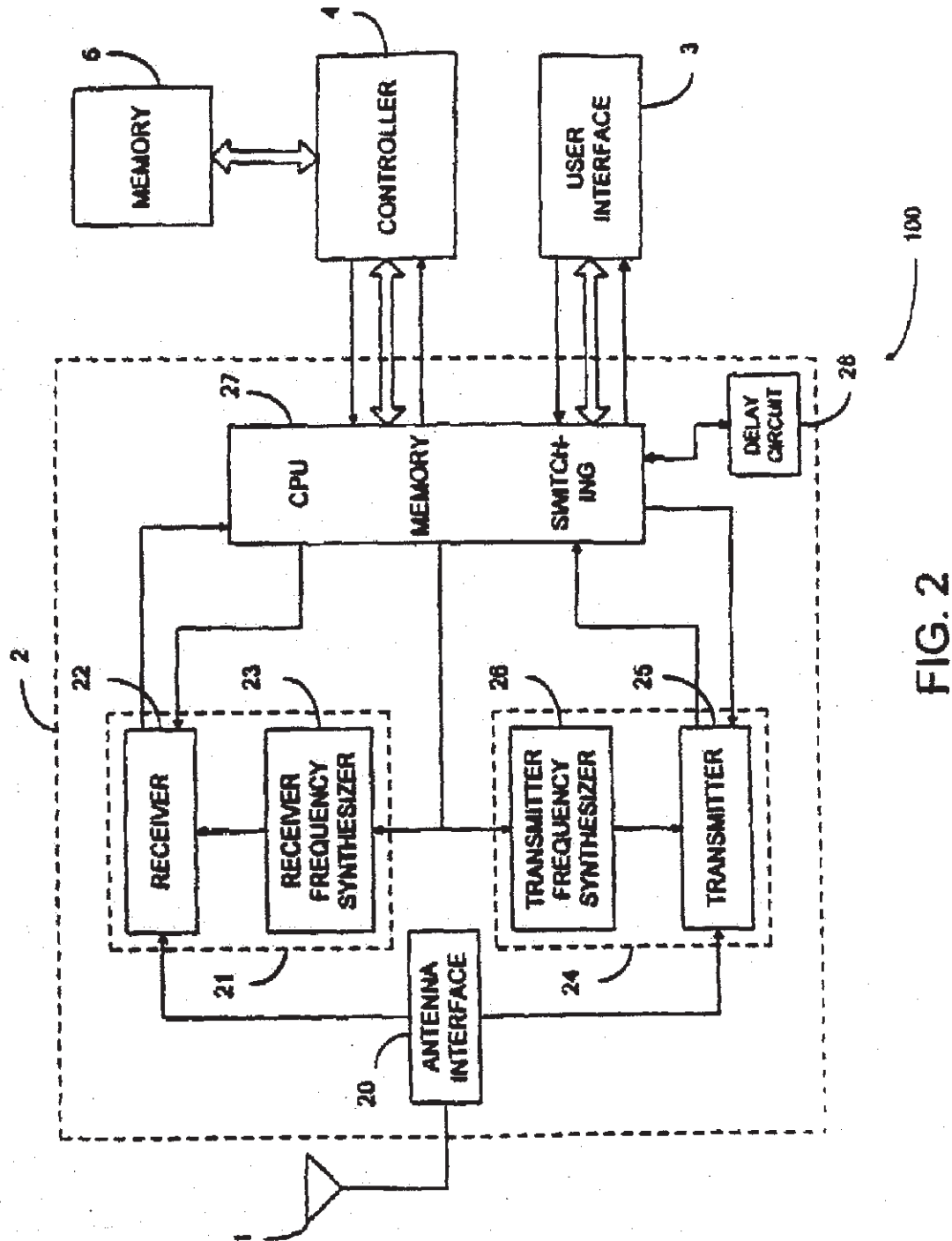


FIG. 2